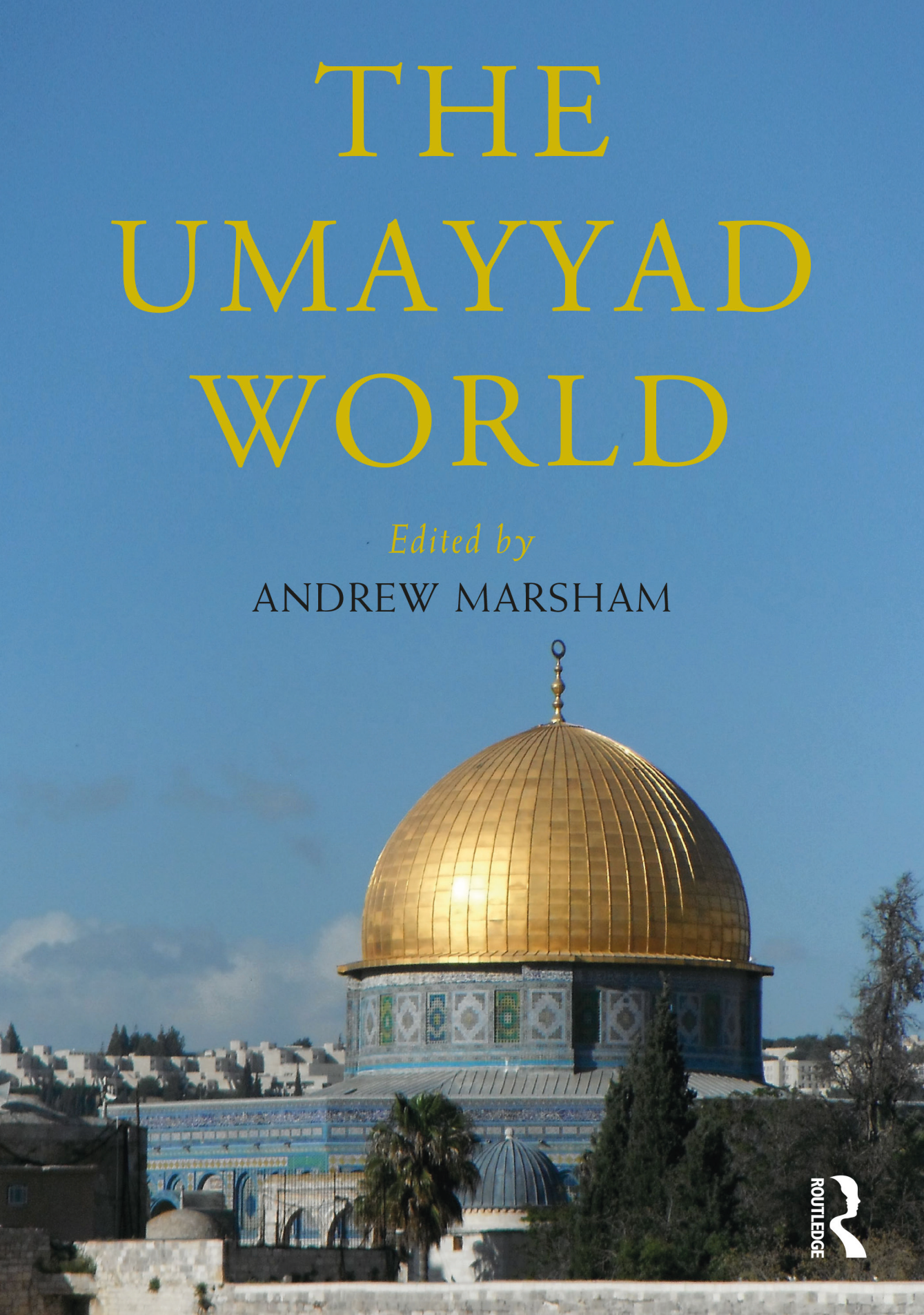
THE UMAYYAD WORLD

Edited by

ANDREW MARSHAM



ROUTLEDGE

THE UMAYYAD WORLD

The Umayyad World encompasses the archaeology, history, art and architecture of the Umayyad era (644–750 CE).

This era was formative both for world history and for the history of Islam. Subjects covered in detail in this collection include regions conquered in Umayyad times, ethnic and religious identity among the conquerors, political thought and culture, administration and the law, art and architecture, the history of religion, pilgrimage and the Qur'an, and violence and rebellion. Close attention is paid to new methods of analysis and interpretation, including source critical studies of the historiography and inter-disciplinary approaches combining literary sources and material evidence.

Scholars of Islamic history, archaeologists, and researchers interested in the Umayyad Caliphate, its context, and influence on the wider world, will find much to enjoy in this volume.

Andrew Marsham is Reader in Classical Arabic Studies at the University of Cambridge and a Fellow of Queens' College. His publications include *Rituals of Islamic Monarchy* (2009) and, with Alain George, *Power, Patronage and Memory in Early Islam* (2018).

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EDITOR'S ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION
The Umayyad World[1]

Andrew Marsham

The Umayyad era was comparatively fleeting, but it has a pivotal place in world history. For about 100 years, from 644 to 750 CE, members of the Umayyad tribe presided over an expanding empire in the Mediterranean and the Middle East. The empire's immediate origins lay in the Prophet Muhammad's (fl. *c.* 610–32 CE) success in creating a religious political community in West Arabia. Muhammad was a member of the Quraysh – the tribal group from the town of Mecca to which the Umayyads also belonged. In the last years of his life Muhammad had unified large parts of the Arabian Peninsula through war and diplomacy. The first Arabian settlements outside the Peninsula took place under Muhammad's second successor, ʿUmar I (r. 634–44), who was from another branch of the Quraysh.[2] Thereafter, members of the Umayyad clan led the empire for most of the next century. Indeed, it is no exaggeration to say that the power structures of the Umayyad Empire both facilitated and shaped the development of new religious and ethnic formations across the southern Mediterranean, the Middle East and western Central Asia – including, most importantly, Islam. These changes transformed all these regions and regions around them in profound and long-lasting ways.

Religious traditions – most of them monotheist – were central to the new social, military and political formations established across Europe, the Mediterranean and the Middle East in the middle centuries of the first millennium CE.[3] In the northern Mediterranean and in northwest Europe, the collapse of Roman imperial power in the fifth century had left behind a series of 'barbarian' kingdoms, whose leaders had acknowledged the religious authority of the priests and monks of the Latin churches. In the Eastern Roman Empire (also known in modern literature as the 'Byzantine Empire'), the Emperor Justinian I (r. 527–65 CE) had built upon the established place of Christianity as the ideology of his empire, issuing new imperial laws with a distinctively Christian character and prosecuting wars of imperial reconquest in the name of 'orthodox', Chalcedonian Christianity. Further East, in Sasanian Iran (224–651 CE), the ruling elite had adopted the Zoroastrian religious tradition as an ideology of imperial rule, even as Syriac Christianities were making significant advances among some of their subjects, and had spread beyond the Sasanians' eastern borders, into Central Asia, China and India.[4] The Jewish populations of Egypt, Palestine and Iraq also formed substantial minority groups in these regions of the Roman and Sasanian empires. Many regions in East Africa and West Asia that were independent of Rome

and Iran, such as Armenia, Ethiopia and South Arabia, were also Christian (in the case of Armenia and Ethiopia) or Jewish (in the case of Himyar, in South Arabia).

In the middle decades of the seventh century, the Arabian conquerors under ʿUmar I and his Umayyad successors supplanted the Roman Empire in the southern and eastern Mediterranean and the Sasanian Empire in Iraq, Iran and points east. In so doing, they entered more fully into a world where various forms of Christianity and Zoroastrianism were the dominant religious traditions, alongside various types of Judaism and numerous smaller religious belief systems. The Arabian conquerors had much in common with their fellow monotheists and, like the peoples they conquered, expressed military and political loyalty in strongly religiously inflected terms.[5] Indeed, practices of knowledge transmission and ideas about religious authority and religious observance were widely shared across confessional boundaries in the seventh-century Middle East. It is not clear exactly how the Arabians themselves initially conceived of those confessional boundaries; after all, new religious traditions usually emerge as reformist or apocalyptic versions of existing ones. Certainly, the conquerors' beliefs and practices – that is, the religion of Islam in an embryonic, or 'pre-classical' form – had particular affinities with those of both the rabbinic Jews of the Levant and also the Coptic and Syriac Christianities of the wider region. At the same time, other aspects of nascent Islam clearly relate to other pre-Islamic Arabian 'pagan' religious concepts and customs.[6]

It is important to note that in the Umayyad century, the new West Arabian monotheism of Islam was adopted for the most part only by the conquering armies and their descendants. There is limited evidence for widespread proselytising in the Umayyad era. Non-Arabians do seem to have adopted the new religion in small numbers, usually as they took roles in the new military or administration, but there is good evidence that some soldiers and scribes retained their pre-conquest faith, especially among Christian groups. Traces of controversies over individuals joining the conquerors can be found in both Christian sources (who sometimes perceived this as apostasy from Christianity) and Muslim sources (who argued over the participation of Christians in the Islamic administration).[7] Substantial conversion outside the new Arabian settlements took much longer – in some regions, centuries. One widely cited but approximate estimate has it that in the older urban centres of northeast Iran in 750, at the very end of the Umayyad era, perhaps fewer than ten per cent of the population would have identified as Muslim.[8]

The Islam of the seventh and eighth centuries was very different, therefore, from the religion we know from later periods. Many of the practices of later, medieval, Islam – which were supported by high rates of urban literacy and Arabic book production, and sophisticated traditions of religious and legal scholarship – had yet to take shape.[9] Indeed, Aziz Al-Azmeh proposes that this first century might better be called the era of 'Paleo-Islam', while Fred Donner argues that the Arabian conquerors – in the seventh century at least – are more accurately described as 'the Believers' Movement'.[10] These formulations seek to capture, on the one hand, the nascent, 'pre-classical' character of the religion of the seventh-century followers of Muhammad and, on the other, the unformed or fluctuating doctrinal boundaries between the beliefs and practices of the Arabian monotheists and other Judaeo-Christian groups – at least as they were perceived from the point of view of the conquerors. For the same reasons, 'West Arabian monotheists' and 'conquerors' are used here as respective labels for

the new seventh-century religious movement and for the new military and political formation associated with it. The evidence suggests that for the early eighth century and after, 'Islam' and 'Muslim' become less anachronistic, while 'Arab' also began to be used in new ways in the same period by those claiming a heritage in the Arabian Peninsula.

Whatever the exact character of the West Arabian monotheism of the mid-seventh century, it is certainly the case that the religious tradition that became known as Islam was shaped decisively by the social and political developments of the Umayyad era. The very fact of the military and political success of the conquerors is what allowed the new religious tradition to thrive. But contests over power and authority within the emerging Umayyad Empire also shaped that tradition. One clear example of this is the coalescence of much of the opposition to Umayyad rule around ideas of the legitimacy of the Prophet Muhammad's more immediate Hashimite relatives among the Quraysh – that is, the formation of traditions that informed what became Shi'i Islam. Another important focus of opposition was the Zubayrid branch of the Quraysh, one of whose number claimed the caliphate from 683–92. Many of the other forms of opposition are labelled 'Kharijite' in the sources; some of these informed later Ibadi Islam.[11] All these reactions against the Umayyads appear to have provoked ideological responses by the Umayyads themselves. Numerous other instances of contests over authority and right practice can be detected in the sources, with the Umayyad rulers both intervening in, and being constrained by, the wider culture in which they sought to maintain their power. For shared symbolic idioms, beliefs and practices do not bring about peaceful coexistence in themselves. Status and class, as well as tribal or regional loyalties, can all cut across or align with religion and culture.[12] Group definition very often amounts to the emphasis of difference within mutually intelligible, or at least partially intelligible, belief systems – a 'narcissism of small differences'.[13] In the Umayyad era these conflicts shaped the various strands of the Islamic tradition as well as relationships between those strands and the other religious traditions of the Mediterranean and the Middle East.

Many of the elements now seen as fundamental to Islam developed only in Umayyad times. The beginning of the Umayyad period witnessed the compilation as a book of the canonical text of the Qurʾan.[14] The mid-to-late Umayyad period perhaps saw the very beginnings of the formal transmission of the Hadith – the reports about the life and times of the Prophet Muhammad and his Companions that in very different forms became important to both Sunni and Shi'i Muslims.[15] Some of the practices of the annual pilgrimage to Mecca – the Hajj – were also established only under the Umayyads. Some of the defining features of the architecture and fixtures of the congregational mosque likewise only developed in the Umayyad period.[16] The distinctive Islamic aniconic and epigraphic coins were an Umayyad innovation (after 696–7 CE), on which the image of the ruler, which had been a feature of all Middle Eastern coinage for centuries, was replaced with the Arabic statement of the faith and citations from the Qurʾan.[17] It was also under the Umayyads that scribes and scholars elaborated new forms of poetry and prose in a distinctive version of the dialects of North Arabia, initiating the 'classical Arabic' of a new imperial elite.[18] In the same period the ethnonym 'the Arabs' (*al-ʿarab*) first began to be used by groups across the new empire who claimed a shared heritage in the Arabian Peninsula and in their use of the Arabic language.[19] The first documentary attestations of the titles 'Commander

of the Faithful' (*amir al-mu'minin*) and 'Caliph' (*khalifa*) likewise date from the Umayyad period.[20] The structures of law and tax that governed relations between the Arabian monotheist minority of conquerors and the majority populations of conquered peoples (mostly Jews, Christians and Zoroastrians) also gradually evolved in this era in parallel with the creation of the new empire.[21]

The military conquests that shaped these epoch-making political, social and cultural developments were unprecedented in their scale.[22] At its greatest extent, in the 730s, the Umayyad Empire was the largest in history by land area to date. (It would be surpassed only by that of the Mongols in the thirteenth century.)[23] When the first member of the Umayyad clan took power, in 644 CE, the Prophet Muhammad's death was only 12 years past, and the oldest major settlements established by his followers outside of the Arabian Peninsula were all fewer than ten years old: Basra and Kufa, in southern Iraq (both *c.* 638 CE), and Fustat in Egypt (founded *c.* 643 CE, now within modern Cairo), as well as smaller settlements in Greater Syria (after *c.* 635 CE). These garrisons were military outposts in lands seized in the 630s and early 640s from the centuries-old Roman and Sasanian Persian empires (see Figures 1.1 and 1.2). By the time Marwan II, the fifteenth and last Umayyad caliph, was killed, fleeing the 'Abbasid Revolution' of 750 CE, there were majority-Muslim cities in what are now modern Spain and Portugal in the west, in Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Pakistan in the east, and at many points in the 8,000 or so kilometres in between. Fortifications were garrisoned by Muslim troops in the highlands of modern Georgia and Azerbaijan in the north, and in the south, Muslim soldiers raided into modern Sudan and Somalia, and traded in the Indian Ocean on routes leading to India and China (see Figure 1.3).

Expansionist warfare in the Umayyad era built upon the initial conquests and settlements of the 630s and early 640s. The conquests of the Umayyad era came in two main waves, each following a hiatus caused in part by civil war within the Arabian elite. In the first wave, new garrisons were established in the 670s in Ifriqiya (modern Tunisia) in the west and Khurasan (modern Turkmenistan) in the east, following the civil war of 656–61. The second wave comprised a series of frontier wars in the 690s, 700s and 710s, in the wake of a second civil war (683–92). The Sasanian Empire of Iran had collapsed by the 650s, and surviving members of its ruling family went into exile in Tang China.[24] What was left of the Roman Empire – the Balkans, Italy, Sicily and modern Turkey – survived. Roman survival came about through a combination of drastic economic and military reform, successful diplomatic relations with the Khazar Turks north and east of the Black Sea and the good fortune that the Roman capital of Constantinople – on a defensible isthmus in the Bosphorus – proved impregnable to the Umayyad army and navy.[25] A heavy defeat suffered by the Umayyad forces at Constantinople in 717–18 is seen as a turning point in their military fortunes, and a key factor in the unravelling of their power within a generation. The failure at Constantinople was compounded by a second defeat in 740 at Akroinon (in modern Turkey), and after 744 Umayyad unity collapsed irrevocably.[26] Even so, the structures of imperial power and authority that the Umayyads and their allies had taken up and then developed during the century of their rule meant that when they were overthrown and replaced by the Abbasid family in 750, they left a legacy that was sustained under Abbasid rule and would continue to shape the Islamic world in the coming centuries.[27]

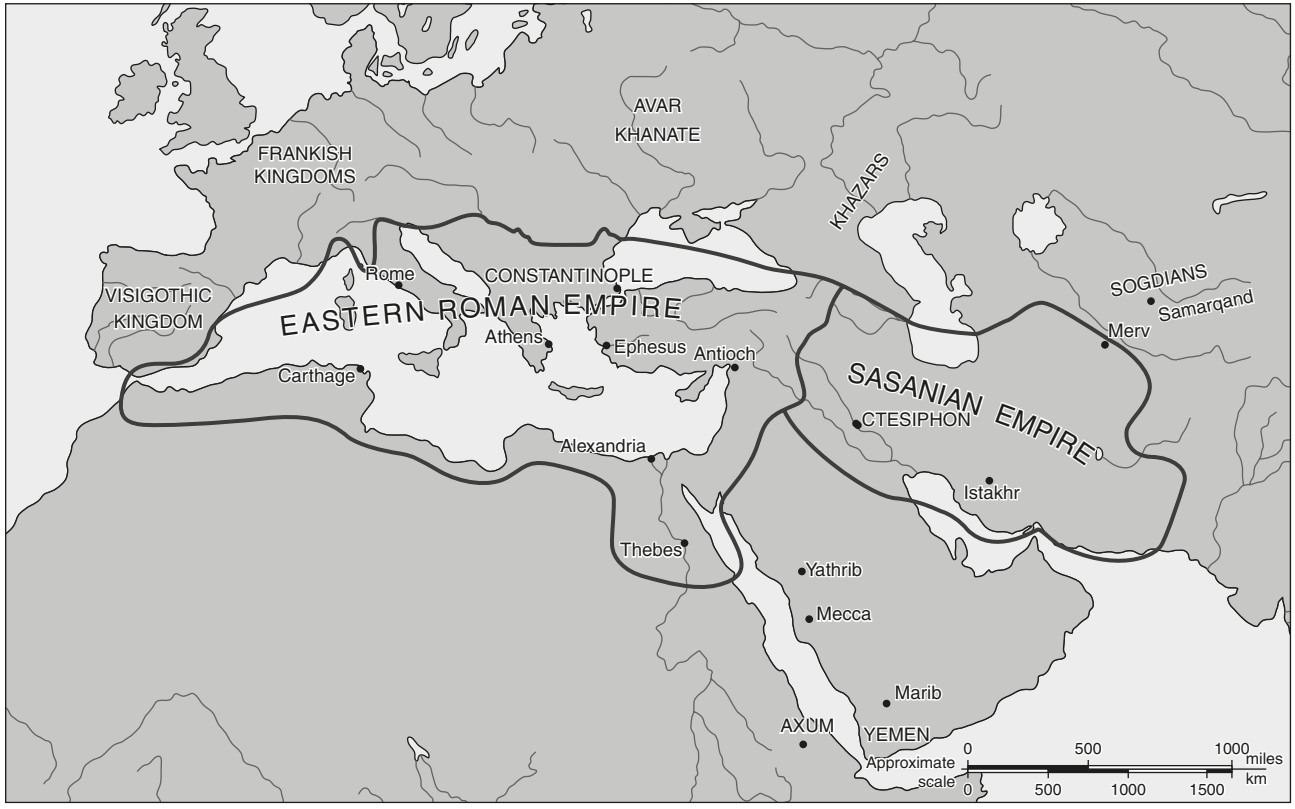

Figure 1.1 Map of the Eastern Roman and Sasanian Empires in *c.* 600 CE.
Based on Hugh Kennedy, 'The World on the Eve of the Muslim Conquests circa 600 A.D.', in *An Historical Atlas of Islam*, edited by Hugh Kennedy. Brill. Consulted online on 25 April 2020, http://dx.doi.org.ezp.lib.cam.ac.uk/10.1163/1573-3912_hai_HAI_6.
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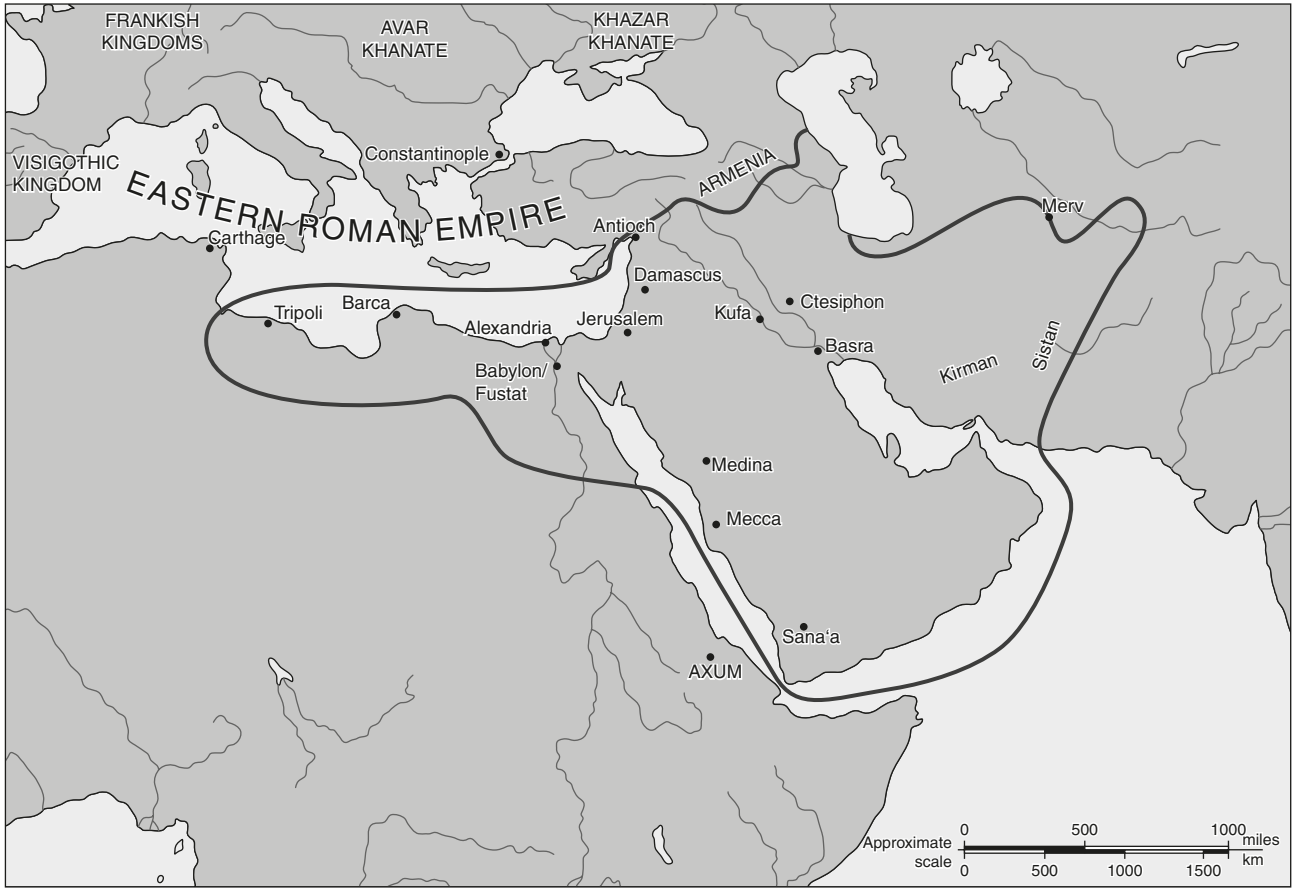

Figure 1.2 Map of the Conquests to *c.* 650 CE.
Based on Hugh Kennedy, 'Early Muslim Conquests', in *An Historical Atlas of Islam*, edited by Hugh Kennedy. Brill. Consulted online on 25 April 2020, http://dx.doi.org.ezp.lib.cam.ac.uk/10.1163/1573-3912_hai_HAI_7.
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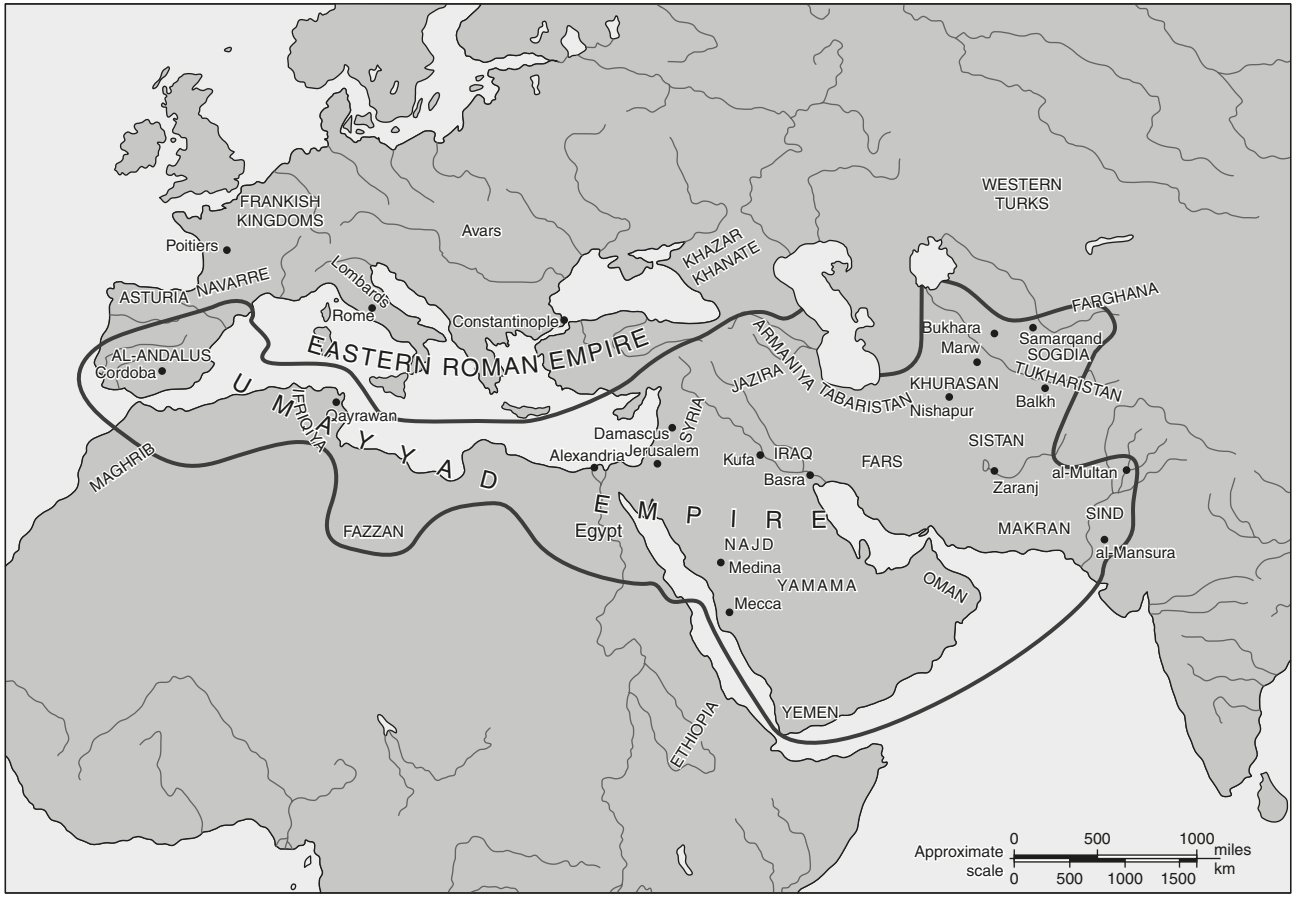

Figure 1.3 Map of the Umayyad Empire at its greatest extent *c.* 740 CE.
Based on Hugh Kennedy, 'The Umayyad Caliphate circa 132/750', in *An Historical Atlas of Islam*, edited by Hugh Kennedy. Brill. Consulted online on 25 April 2020, http://dx.doi.org.ezp.lib.cam.ac.uk/10.1163/1573-3912_hai_HAI_8.
First published online: 2012.
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Although the military manpower for the first conquests of the new empire had been provided by peoples from across much of the Arabian Peninsula, the senior leadership of the conquests had predominantly been drawn from the western highlands – the region now known as the Hijaz. Indeed, most of the leading men of the conquests hailed from three small towns – Mecca and Ta'if, which were close neighbours, and Medina, which lay about 300 kilometres to their north. Muhammad and the first caliphs were from Mecca, and all were said to have been from Quraysh (see Figure 1.4); the early empire might be legitimately be described as a West Arabian empire, in that this was the shared heritage of the majority of its military, political and religious elite.[28]

This situation began to change as the conquests advanced into North Africa, Iran and Central Asia in the early eighth century, and as the new garrisons in the conquered territories drew in members of defeated local populations. This recruitment was a conduit for ideological changes in the frontier populations; the adoption of forms of Islam as ideologies of legitimate resistance by peoples in the Maghrib and Khurasan, on the western and eastern frontiers respectively, was a significant factor in the fall of the Umayyads in the 740s.[29] But despite these transformations on the frontiers, and in the armies and administration of the empire, many of its leading positions remained in the hands of people of West Arabian heritage even into the early ninth century; the prestige and power of Quraysh was such that when the Umayyads were overthrown, it was their Qurashi cousins, the Abbasids, who took their place. Indeed, the idea that the caliph of the Muslims should be drawn from the tribe of Quraysh became an axiom of Islamic political thought which has retained some force, albeit eventually much diminished, throughout Islamic history.[30]

That the Umayyads fell from power but most of their empire and its institutions survived offers a final illustration of one of the most remarkable features of the new empire – its resilience in the face of internal turmoil. The empire had expanded for the best part of a century, despite the chaos of the collapse of its ruling elite into widespread internecine warfare on three occasions, and the conquest of its heartlands by an army from its easternmost frontiers in the Abbasid Revolution of 747–50.[31] Furthermore, even the regions that broke free of central control in the 740s – western North Africa and Spain – did so under new elites who identified as Muslims of various kinds.[32] It is very likely that the shared culture of the West Arabian ruling elite accounts in large part for the persistence of the new religious and political imperial formation; even during civil war, there seems to have been a widely shared expectation that the new religious community should in principle remain united under West Arabian leadership. The devolved power structures of the empire, with much power concentrated in the hands of the rulers of its large provincial garrisons, also seems to have contributed to this resilience, as substantial regional fiscal power was ceded to the provinces by the caliph at the centre in return for recognition of his authority in the provinces on pain of deposition.[33] The success of the first wave of conquests in the 630s and 640s in comprehensively neutralising the military power of Rome and Iran in the Fertile Crescent was also crucial to the empire's survival, because it left the Arabian rulers of Egypt, Greater Syria, Iraq and western Iran facing little more than small-scale and localised violent resistance.[34] The Umayyad family finally fell from power only when other networks formed on the empire's frontiers that were capable of challenging them both militarily and ideologically, much as the West Arabians

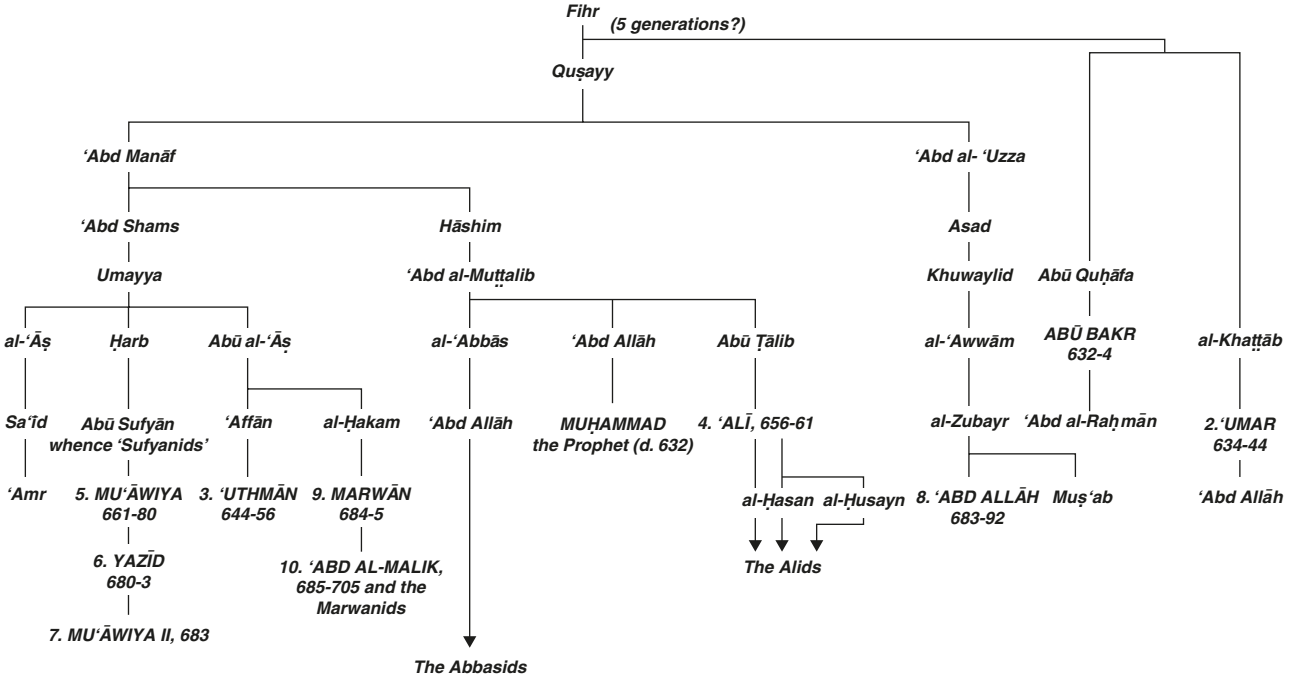

Figure 1.4 Quraysh: Genealogy of the Prophet Muhammad and the early caliphs.

had themselves challenged Rome and Iran in the previous century. But when the Umayyads fell, the structures of imperial power they had controlled survived them, not the least the concept of the caliphate itself – a united monotheist entity, ruled by one man.

This volume, *The Umayyad World*, treats the label 'Umayyad' expansively, as incorporating not just the history of the Umayyad family and their political achievements, but the wider history of the new empire in the long century stretching from the 640s through to the 750s. The intertwining themes of the conquests and the transformations that they wrought among the new ruling groups of the empire are the main foci of attention. The 25 chapters are organised in six parts, beginning with Part I on political culture in the Umayyad period, and Part II on the scribes, administration, and law. Part III turns to the regions of the world conquered under Umayyad rule. Parts IV and V address religious observance and adherence from two specific perspectives: the pilgrimages to Mecca and Jerusalem, which had a central place in the new religious and political culture established by the conquerors, and the religious and cultural identity of both conquerors and conquered as reflected in the material evidence. Finally, Part VI turns to forms of resistance to Umayyad rule, and to the Umayyads' legacies in the literary sources. It ends by glancing across to the second Umayyad political era – that of the Umayyads of Spain (al-Andalus), who survived the crisis of 750 and established an independent emirate in the far west of their former empire.

The 25 chapters are intended to be varied and accessible examples of current scholarship on the Umayyad era, which illustrate some live avenues inquiry into key questions.[35] Some are broad, survey accounts of some of major issues in the history of the Umayyad period (for example, Donner, Legendre, Tillier, Genequand, Munt, Hagemann and Verkinderen), while others provide closer studies that shed light on crucial aspects of these topics (such as Anthony, Webb, Reinfandt, Hawting, Cellard, Hamarneh and Wilk). The chapters are also intended to reflect the range of disciplinary and methodological approaches being applied to the early Islamic past. Indeed, the study of the Umayyad period has long generated innovative scholarship in history, historiography, the history of art and architecture, palaeography and papyrology, numismatics and archaeology, as well as through combinations of these disciplinary approaches. Exploitation of the range of textual sources demands a wide range of specialist skills, with Arabic texts in an assortment of genres – poetry, chronicles, Qur'an, Hadith, jurisprudence, among others – all being important, as well as diverse texts in several other languages, including Syriac, Greek, Coptic, Persian and Armenian.

Many aspects of this period are a matter of lively historical and archaeological debate, and some of these contradictory positions and interpretations will become apparent from chapter to chapter. That said, some common themes and subjects of concern – if not always of consensus – can be identified across the six sections of the book, and these in turn reflect current debates within wider scholarship. Four in particular are perhaps especially worth highlighting here: the problem of the sources; the structures of imperial power; the relationship between conquest and economic change; and the social and cultural consequences of interaction between the conquerors and the conquered.

One of the most well-known problems in early Islamic history is the late date of almost all the narrative sources. The culture of the conquering Arabians was predominantly oral, or 'non-literate', and the narrative histories in Arabic upon which we depend for most of seventh- and eighth-century Umayyad history were all composed long after the Umayyad period, in the ninth and tenth centuries (and in some cases, much later still).[36] Archaeologists and others with an interest in documentary and material culture find it possible to sidestep this issue to some extent by posing questions that depend upon alternative sets of evidence. Some examples in this volume include Meinecke, Legendre, Reinfandt, Morriss and Whitcomb, Fenwick, Lindstedt, Cellard and Hamarneh. The conclusions of these archaeologists, art historians, epigraphers, palaeographers and papyrologists also enable us to reconsider the later literary material with new eyes. For example, Legendre shows that the documentary evidence of the papyri calls into question aspects of the accounts of taxation and administration found in the later literary sources, which tend to retroject Abbasid-era ideas about proper 'Islamic' tax onto the Umayyad past. Cellard demonstrates how the material evidence of the early Qurʾans allows for a fuller and more nuanced understanding of how the early Qurʾan was compiled, transmitted and used than we could derive from the literary tradition alone. The evidence from the mosaic pavements of the Christian churches in the Levant is suggestive, as Hamarneh explains, of how Christian communities in the Levant experienced Arabian rule. The archaeology of the Red Sea and North Africa, discussed respectively by Morriss and Whitcomb and Fenwick, reveals economic processes and social changes that could not be confidently reconstructed from the literary evidence alone.

In contrast, historians seek to tackle the challenges presented by the later literary sources. Chapters which offer new interpretations of the Umayyad era based on source critical assessments of the literary sources include Anthony, Webb, Judd, Tillier and Robinson, among others. Coghill presents some important conclusions for thinking about the Umayyad era, but also for thinking about the formation during the Abbasid period of the extant literary tradition. A common theme in all these chapters is the way that literary texts about the past are composed for social and political purposes; history is culturally constructed and this process of construction itself provides valuable insights into what mattered to its authors. Where the medieval authors demonstrably worked with older materials, it is possible to recognise earlier cultural forms, and very often these yield surprising results when juxtaposed with what was later presented as natural or self-evident. Thus, Webb shows that Maʿadd was a salient collective label for the central Arabian tribes among the conquerors in Umayyad times, which only began to lose out to the more inclusive category of 'Arab' in the later Umayyad period. Similarly, Anthony gets behind the negative image of the Umayyads as despotic 'kings' (*muluk*, sing. *malik*) in some later sources to show that 'kingship' (*mulk*) could also have the entirely positive sense of (divinely sanctioned) 'dominion'.

Besides addressing the challenges posed by the sources, another shared concern of many of the chapters is the structure of imperial power in the Umayyad world. The character and reach of the tax system are explored by Legendre, who favours Nef and Tillier's concept of 'polycentric empire' to describe the significant fiscal and military autonomy enjoyed by provincial governors.[37] Legendre, Vacca, Fenwick and Azad all also emphasise the ongoing importance of warfare in the Transcausasus, the

Maghrib and Khurasan, contested zones that saw prolonged episodes of violence in the later seventh and first half of the eighth centuries. These were all regions with substantial non-Arabian militarised populations, lending them a very different character to the central provinces, where the rapid defeat of the former empires' armies in the mid-seventh century had left the Arabian migrants (and their Syrian nomad allies) as the sole substantial military force. Manzano Moreno notes the exception of Iberia (modern Spain and Portugal), which was an 'island', where the lowland urbanised zones were quickly captured from the Visigoths, but isolated from the core of the empire by the less well-integrated Maghrib. In contrast, the chapter by Hagemann and Verkinderen and that of Robinson explore resistance to Umayyad rule among the new imperial elites and their allies. The former emphasises how much the label 'Kharijite' in the later sources may obscure the variety of resistance to Umayyad rule by conflating various forms of piety and hostility to perceived impious government with a range of forms of violent action that in fact had diverse motivations. Robinson shows how analysis of marriage patterns in the later sources allows for the reconstruction of political alliances within the conquering West Arabian elite, revealing some deep roots for the rebellion of the Hashimite ʿAbd Allah b. Muʿawiya in the 740s, which was in many ways a precursor to the Abbasid Revolution.[38]

A number of the same chapters also reflect on the interaction between the Arabian conquests and the economies of the conquered regions. In many places there were already new economic connections and orientations developing in the centuries before Islam; the conquests and the new imperial links and frontiers they created then helped to drive further changes. In North Africa, north-south Saharan trade routes were probably already beginning to develop in late Roman times.[39] In Khurasan and points east, there is evidence for flourishing local economies in the late Sasanian period, as well as long-distance trade in luxury goods.[40] In this volume, Fenwick notes that the conquests may have further oriented African trade away from the Mediterranean. Azad emphasizes the importance of the wealth of Central Asia to the Muslims' wars in Khurasan and beyond. Likewise, Morriss and Whitcomb propose that the Red Sea was already a zone of expanding commercial activity in the sixth century, but that the Arabian conquests led to the formation of new connections in a maritime imperial zone in this region, which enhanced trading activity and other forms of exchange.

A fourth theme is the question of how interactions between the conquerors and the conquered and within the conquest elite itself may have generated social and cultural change. The aftermath of the second civil war (683–92), in which the Umayyads and their Syrian allies saw off serious challenges to their power and authority from the Alid and Zubayrid branches of Quraysh as well as from various 'Kharijite' movements, was a watershed in public articulations of a distinctive Islamic confessional identity. Donner sets out the case for a 'symbiotic' relationship between Christians and the migrant 'Believers' in seventh-century Umayyad Syria; he sees the 690s as an era when the labels 'Islam' and 'Muslim' began to gain significant prominence, in part as a function of growing tensions with, and clearer differentiation from, Christians in the same region. Lindstedt sees inscriptions on rock – many of them carved by private individuals – as evidence to support Donner's model of a shift from a more diffuse monotheism to a distinctive religious confession, again with a turning point in the 690s. Hawting and Mourad suggest a similar chronology in the

history of pilgrimage: Hawting shows that the 690s and the second civil war emerge as a decisive moment in the evolution of 'Islamic' ritual at Mecca; Mourad traces the importance of Umayyad architectural patronage in Jerusalem in building up this city as a religious centre for the conquerors in the later seventh and early eighth century, before a decline in its importance in the later Umayyad era. Other contemporary processes at work were more gradual, however, and less directly related to elite conflict in the civil war. As noted above, Webb tracks the parallel history of ethnic markers, noting that Maʿadd was a more salient ethnic label than 'Arabs' for much of the Umayyad era. Judd and Tillier use the literary evidence to point to the emergence of features of Islamic legal practice towards the end of the Umayyad era that would persist into later Islamic times.

The range of disciplines involved and differences over evidence and its interpretation mean that consistent use of terminology and other conventions throughout this book would not be desirable even were it possible. Some attempt at a degree of consistency in these matters has nevertheless been made. In most of the chapters a simplified transliteration system for Arabic has been adopted, except for two chapters where specialists would particularly benefit from a fuller transliteration of the Arabic (Cellard and Lindstedt, on the Qur'an and epigraphy, respectively). The Common Era (CE, or AD) dating system is used throughout, with additional Hijra (AH) dates from the Islamic lunar calendar added for precision where appropriate (for example, for coin mint dates, inscriptions and documents).[41] Individual scholars' preferences for labels such as 'Roman' and 'Byzantine', and for when, and in what contexts, the labels 'Arab' and 'Muslim' are appropriate have been respected. 'Roman' is now often favoured as a label because it was used by contemporaries in both Greek and Arabic, but 'Byzantine' is also still widely used, especially in art history and archaeology, to distinguish a specific late period of the history of the Roman Empire, beginning either after the third century CE, or after the sixth century CE. As noted above, the terms 'Arab' and 'Muslim' have recently been seen as potentially anachronistic when used with reference to the seventh century, because there is very little evidence that these labels were widely used by the first conquering armies that came out of Arabia (see in particular the chapters by Donner, Lindstedt and Webb in this volume). They do nevertheless have some utility based in established convention and offer an acknowledgment that Arab and Muslim cultures and identities have important roots in seventh-century ideas and events (see, for example, the chapter by Levy-Rubin).

There is also some diversity in the language of periodisation, as appropriate to discipline and theoretical approach. To what extent and in what ways 'Islam' belongs to 'Late Antiquity', and how far these categories are helpful, remain open questions. Although most of the chapters in this volume do make use of the category of 'Late Antiquity', they do so in rather different ways; see, in particular, the chapter by Munt on this point. To archaeologists interested in social and economic change, short periodisations defined by changes in political elites often seem unhelpful; some contributions with archaeological interests take longer perspectives, either reaching back into the sixth century or looking forward into the ninth, or both (for example, Morriss and Whitcomb, Fenwick and Azad), to present longer social and economic contexts for the events of the Umayyad period.

A further note on the use of 'Umayyad' may also be helpful, since it can denote very different things. Conventional narratives of Umayyad history often begin in *c.*

661 CE with the accession of Muʿawiya b. Abi Sufyan (r. 661–80), at Jerusalem, and end with the defeat of the Umayyad dynasty by their close relatives and rivals, the Abbasids, in 750. But it is worth noting that this chronology reflects a later, Sunni, narrative of early Islamic history, in which the Prophet Muhammad was succeeded by four of his closest Companions in sequence, and where the first Umayyad, 'Uthman, is grouped with these four 'rightly-guided' (*rashidun*) caliphs rather than with the cousins that succeeded him. Three of these first four leaders ruled from Medina, in West Arabia: Abu Bakr (r. 632–4); ʿUmar I (r. 634–44); and ʿUthman (r. 644–56); the fourth, ʿAli (r. 656–*c.* 661), was proclaimed at Medina but moved his capital to Iraq. Alongside the Prophet himself, all four hold a special place in developed Sunni law as exemplars. However, this tradition smooths over the extent of the violent crisis that overtook the new Arabian empire in 656, when the third of these caliphs, the Umayyad ʿUthman (r. 644–56), was killed by disaffected fellow believers. ʿUthman's successor, and fellow son-in-law of the Prophet Muhammad, ʿAli (r. 656–61), was not recognised by those who claimed to be acting to avenge ʿUthman. ʿAli's assassination then opened the way for ʿUthman's fellow Umayyad and second cousin Muʿawiya to take leadership of the whole empire in *c.* 661. Muʿawiya's main support came from Greater Syria, where he had been ʿUthman's governor, and this explains his decision to move the political centre of the new empire there, where it stayed for most of the next 90 years, until the Abbasids established their capital in Iraq. Some partisan Syrian lists of rulers contemporaneous with these events completely ignore ʿAli and pass straight from ʿUthman to Muʿawiya, reflecting a Syrian, pro-Umayyad perspective; in their version of history, ʿAli was not a legitimate leader at all.[42] But it is certainly the case that ʿUthman was from the Umayyad clan, and acted to some extent as an 'Umayyad' and for these reasons, he is included here (see Figure 1.4).

The history of the Umayyads as a family of rulers falls into three main phases. From his base at Medina, ʿUthman made an exceptional number of marriage alliances, seeking to make himself a nodal figure for the power politics of the wider clan of Quraysh of which he and all the leaders of the new empire were members.[43] Whether ʿUthman had the intention of establishing dynastic rule, we cannot know, but he certainly made use of his family connections in ruling recently conquered territories, where he appointed relatives by blood or marriage as governors. In doing so, ʿUthman can certainly be said to have acted patrimonially, as 'an Umayyad' – or more precisely, as an ʿAbshami, since his key appointments were not just descendants of his grandfather, Umayya, but of his great-grandfather, ʿAbd Shams. This kin-based politics of ʿUthman was in part what provoked his killing in 656. For his part, Muʿawiya, who is said to have made much of his claim to be avenging ʿUthman, certainly thought and acted dynastically. He too used kin-connections in his appointments to senior commands.[44] Furthermore, his attempt to pass power to his own son was a partial success during and after 680, and Muʿawiya and his son and grandson are known together as the Sufyanid dynasty, after Muʿawiya's father, Abu Sufyan (d. *c.* 653–5). However, Muʿawiya's efforts to secure the caliphate for his own progeny prompted immediate resistance from those who were excluded from the prospect of leadership, and led to the second civil war of 683–92. A third branch of the Umayyad clan – the Marwanids – then reasserted widely accepted authority in 692,

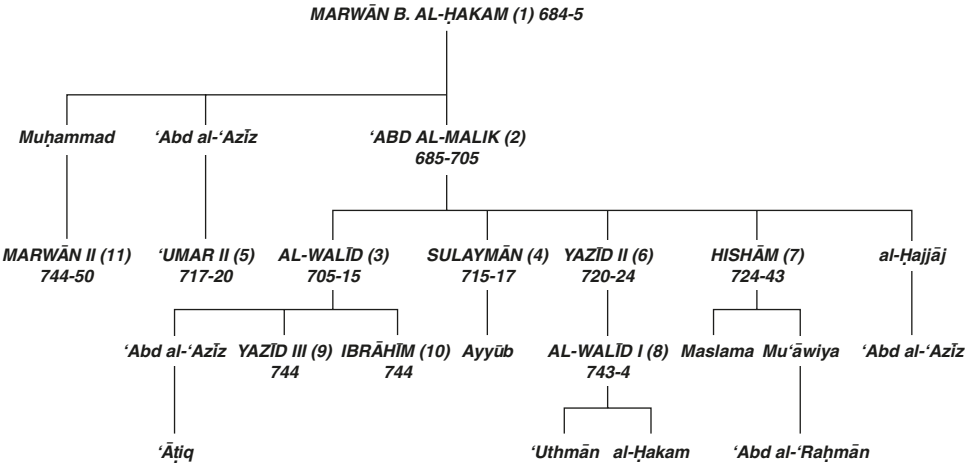

Figure 1.5 Genealogy of the Marwanid Umayyad caliphs.

and this clan, who were all descended from Marwan b. al-Hakam (r. 684–5), ruled for three more generations, down to the revolution which toppled them in 750 (see Figure 1.5). Three of their number had long reigns: ʿAbd al-Malik (r. 685/692–705), and two of his sons al-Walid (r. 705–15) and Hisham (r. 724–43), but six of the other seven all ruled for fewer than four years apiece. (The seventh, Marwan II ruled in circumstances of ongoing civil war, from 744–50.) This dynastic ill-luck, with many Umayyads dying relatively young of natural causes has perhaps been underestimated as a factor in the failure of the dynasty.

In the title of this volume, as noted above, 'Umayyad' is used in a capacious sense, to refer to an era of history in which this family enjoyed significant political success at the centre of a vast new empire, in a similar way to the use of 'Plantagenet' or 'Tudor' might be used in English history. But one can arguably speak only of an Umayyad 'dynasty' after the 660s, which is also the beginning of the 'Syrian Umayyad' era, brought about by Muʿawiya's transfer of the imperial centre to Damascus and Greater Syria (*Bilad al-Sham*). After all, we do not know how ʿUthman might have sought to organise the succession, and power was only publicly transferred from one member of the family to another for the first time when Muʿawiya appointed his son Yazid as his successor. It is also important to note that the transfer of power between members of the Umayyad family was patrimonial; there was no principle of primogeniture. Instead, any leading member of the clan could have some claim to the leadership, with pledged agreements being used to try to manage this open succession system.[45] At the other end of the Syrian Umayyad era, ʿAbd al-Rahman, a grandson of the Marwanid caliph Hisham, is said to have survived the Abbasid Revolution of 747–50 and to have founded an emirate on the Iberian Peninsula (al-Andalus, modern Spain and Portugal). These Andalusian Umayyads are not the focus of this volume, although the last chapter, by Wilk, proposes new ways of thinking about law and ideology in this Umayyad successor state. This Andalusian Umayyad dynasty would endure for almost another 300 years, until 1031 CE, but the centre of the Muslim Empire after 750 had remained in the Fertile Crescent, in Abbasid Iraq.

NOTES

1 I would like to thank Simon Loseby, Amira Bennison and Alain George for their advice, which substantially improved this text. All remaining errors are my own.
2 ʿUmar I was from the Banu ʿAdi in the paternal line, and the Banu Makhzum in the maternal line, see al-Zubayri 1953: 347.
3 Sarris 2011; Fowden 2014.
4 Payne 2015.
5 Marsham 2009; Esders 2012; Marsham 2018. For the wider context see Howard-Johnston 2010; Sarris 2011. For some arguments for the direct influence of Roman ideology on the West Arabians, see Lecker 2015 and Tesei 2019.
6 Brockopp 2017 presents a suggestive discussion of this confessional context and its implications. On Islam and Christianity, see Donner, in this volume. On West Arabia in Late Antiquity, see Munt, in this volume, with further references.
7 Simonsohn 2016 and Yarbrough 2012, respectively.
8 Bulliet 1979 and Donner in this volume.
9 This point is emphasised in Brockopp 2017.
10 Al-Azmeh 2014; Donner 2010. See also the comments of Munt and others in this volume.
11 Van Ess 2017–19. On Shiʿism see also Robinson in this volume. On Kharijism, see Hagemann and Verkinderen in this volume.
12 See the discussion in Webb 2018 as well as Donner, Webb and Hagemann and Verkinderen in this volume.
13 The term was originally Freud's 2002: 50–1 and is helpful for thinking about how similar groups can differentiate themselves. Brockopp 2017 uses similar terminology in thinking about early Islam and its relationship with Christianity. Another useful discussion is Sizgorich 2009, with further references.
14 Déroche 2013 and Cellard in this volume.
15 Schoeler 2006, Judd 2014 in this volume, and Brockopp 2017.
16 On the Hajj, see Hawting in this volume. The *mihrab* and *maqsura* were Umayyad-era developments in the mosque; see Whelan 1986 and Mostafa 2016. See also Mourad in this volume.
17 Bates 1986.
18 On the development of Islam in the Umayyad period, see Donner 2010 and in this volume. On poetry see Jayyusi 1983. On prose, see Latham 1983; Al-Qadi 1992. On history-writing, see Coghill in this volume.
19 Webb 2016 and in this volume.
20 Marsham 2018 and Anthony in this volume.
21 Legendre in this volume.
22 A survey history of these 'great Arab conquests' is Kennedy 2007. For a detailed study of the first phase of the conquests in the early-to-mid seventh century, see Donner 1981.
23 Myrdal 2012.
24 Crone 2012: 4–5.
25 Haldon 2016.
26 Blankinship 1994: 33–4, 200.
27 Bligh-Abramski 1988.
28 Munt 2016 points out the implications of this for the unity of the empire in the Umayyad era.
29 A point made by Crone 1980 and Crone 2006.
30 Crone 2013.
31 Crone 1980. On the participants in the Abbasid Revolution, see Agha 2003.
32 Moreno 2010 and Fenwick, Manzano Moreno and Wilk in this volume.

33 It is often observed that the caliphs were reasonably effective at removing governors and replacing them, but that comparatively little tax and tribute seems to have been returned from the provinces to the centre. See, for example, Crone 1980.
34 For a maximalist interpretation of these early victories by the Arabians, see Howard-Johnston 2010, who also notes the importance of the Mardaites/*Jarajima* in the Lebanese highlands as the most important instance of local resistance in coordination with the neighbouring power of Constantinople.
35 Surveys and narrative histories of the Umayyad period include Hawting 2000; Robinson 2010; Hoyland 2015; Kennedy 2016. See also, Marsham forthcoming.
36 For the category 'non-literate' (a society where many have some literacy but where the social structures require only very limited use of writing), see MacDonald 2010: 5.
37 Nef and Tillier 2011 and Legendre in this volume, and above in this introduction, on how this may have contributed, alongside a shared West Arabian political culture, to the resilience of the empire.
38 For similar methods, see Ahmed 2007 and Robinson 2019.
39 Mattingly et al. 2017.
40 Simpson 2014.
41 On the calendars, see EI2, 'Tarʾikh A.I.1' (F. C. De Blois). For conversion between the two calendars, see Van Gent 2019.
42 Borrut 2011.
43 Al-Zubayri 1953: 161; al-Baladhuri 1997–2004: V, 252–4; al-Tabari 1879–1901: I, 3055–7; Ahmed 2007: 59–60.
44 See Legendre in this volume.
45 On the development of this system of pledged loyalty to the caliphs' heirs, see Marsham 2009 and Alajmi 2013.

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PART I

POLITICAL CULTURE

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CHAPTER TWO

LIVING TOGETHER
Social perceptions and changing interactions of Arabian Believers and other religious communities during the Umayyad period

Fred M. Donner

PRELIMINARIES

Islam arose in western Arabia in the early seventh century as the result of the teachings and political activity of Muhammad b. ʿAbd Allah (d. 632 CE), a townsman of Mecca, who is recognized by Muslims as their Prophet – the one to whom, over the course of the final 25 years of his life, God revealed His word. These revelations were ultimately compiled to form the text of the Qurʾan, the Islamic scripture, in a process that is still poorly understood, but which seems to have taken place largely during the seventh century. The oldest surviving manuscripts of the Qurʾan show that the text was mostly stabilized, at least in its *rasm* or consonantal skeleton, by the end of the seventh century (if not earlier), and certainly by the early eighth century.[1]

The traditional Muslim narrative sources (chronicles, biographies, collections of sayings of the Prophet, and other works), followed closely by most Western scholarship of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, depicted Islam from its first appearance as being already a clearly defined monotheistic religion, distinct in particular from Judaism and Christianity.[2] The fact that the Qurʾan contains a number of passages critical of some Christian or Jewish doctrines or practices (such as the idea that Jesus was divine and God's son, or the stringency of Jewish dietary laws) seemed to support this view that even in the time of the Prophet, Islam was what has been called a 'reified religion'.[3] The rapid expansion of the state that followed in the decades after Muhammad's death in 632 were accordingly understood as the conquest of non-Muslims by Muslims; and the relations of the Umayyads, as Muslim rulers, to their subject populations were conceptualized simply in terms of relations between Muslims and non-Muslims: Christians, Jews, Zoroastrians, and others.

This traditional picture of a sharp division between Muslim and non-Muslim extending all the way back to the very beginnings of Islam, however, is misleading and not consonant with much of the relevant evidence for the first Islamic centuries. The Qurʾan itself generally does not refer to 'Islam' or call the Prophet's followers 'Muslims', but rather speaks of them primarily as 'Believers' (*muʾminun*).[4] Moreover, certain passages in the Qurʾan suggest that some 'Peoples of the Book' (*ahl al-kitab*),

as Christians and Jews were called, were considered to be Believers.[5] The document often called the 'Constitution of Medina', evidently the text of Muhammad's agreement with the people of Yathrib (Medina) when he and his followers first came there from Mecca in 622, includes Jewish clans within the Prophet's new community there.[6] And, although it is difficult to be certain of its reliability, a report in the chronicle attributed to the Armenian bishop Sebeos (writing probably in the 660s) states that the Believers' first governor of Jerusalem was a Jew.[7] The campaigns of conquest undoubtedly did involve much violence, but there is reason to think that both Muslim and non-Muslim sources, for different reasons, may exaggerate the amount of violence, and there is little reason to think that it was directed against specific religious groups.[8]

Following Muʿawiya's accession to power in 660, the dichotomy between the Umayyad rulers and the populations they ruled was no doubt clear to everyone. But we cannot assume that this cleavage between rulers and ruled corresponded to a simple and generally observed distinction in practical terms between 'Muslims' and 'non-Muslims', as we so casually tend to characterize them today. For one thing, the transition in self-identity of the community inaugurated by Muhammad from that of 'Believers' (*muʾminun*) to that of 'Muslims' (*muslimun*) seems to have been a prolonged one that took effect gradually in the course of the Umayyad period itself. In a few documents of the seventh century, the rulers refer to their hegemony as the 'jurisdiction of the Believers' (*qadaʾ al-muʾminin*)[9] and routinely to their ruler as 'commander of the Believers' (*amir al-muʾminin*);[10] they do not yet call themselves Muslims or their movement Islam. Indeed, the word *islam* is conspicuous by its absence in the discourse of the rulers (inscriptions and other documents) of most of the seventh century. It is possible that the eventual shift in the ruling community's self-conception from Believers to Muslims was inaugurated by the Umayyad rulers themselves, for the first known document using the word *islam* as designation for the new faith is found in the inscriptions of the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem, built by the Umayyad ruler ʿAbd al-Malik around 692.[11]

It thus appears that, at first, the Umayyads and their followers, as Believers, may have felt quite comfortable among members of other monotheistic communities, particularly Christians. This diffuseness of communal boundaries should not surprise us, for there is considerable evidence of fluidity in the relations between religious communities in this period. Even between different Christian denominations, which had for centuries been theologically distinct and which viewed each other as heretics, communal boundaries seem in practice to have been quite porous. Syriac sources of the seventh and eighth centuries reveal that people of theologically incompatible Christian confessions often mingled with one another for social and economic reasons – to celebrate festivals or to visit markets, for example, mixing freely and interacting in a variety of positive ways. Even monks from monasteries of different, theologically hostile communities, are known to have intermingled, the complaints of their more theologically stringent superiors notwithstanding. Christians from one community are known to have had children in 'heretical' communities, or to become members of a new community after having long been members of the community of their birth – and sometimes later to have changed back, generating in the process jurisdictional and eucharistic headaches for the priests whose religious services they wished to attend. Villagers whose priest was away, urgently needing to bury a

deceased family member or meet some other liturgical need, would sometimes call on a priest from a neighboring community to perform the rituals, even though he belonged to a 'heretical' sect and his rites were theologically deemed anathema.[12] All of this reveals that, regardless of how sharply Christian theologians and bishops may have striven to define the boundaries of their communities and how forcefully they tried to prevent members of their 'flock' from straying across those boundaries into the domain of 'heretics', laymen and even monks persisted in passing over those boundaries to interact with people from forbidden Christian communities for social, economic, marital, and even religious reasons.

The rise of the Arabian Believers' movement and its intrusion into the already fragmented religious landscape of the Near East simply brought another set of religious boundaries into the arena – and there is no reason to expect that this new set of boundaries would have been any less porous, or seen as any more of a deterrent to intercommunal interaction, than the earlier boundaries between different Christian denominations – especially because it does not seem to have been clear to most people just how different these newcomers actually were in theological terms. Relations in the Umayyad period between the people who come, in time, to be called 'Muslims' and members of the longer-established religious communities – Christians of various kinds, Jews, Samaritans, and Zoroastrians – were likely even more unstable, if only because the new community's religious identity (as Believers or Muslims), and its external boundaries, were themselves still under construction. Unfortunately, we are almost completely in the dark on relations between Jews and the new community, because virtually no Jewish sources for the Umayyad period have survived that might tell us how Jews perceived the new rulers or how they were treated by them. For Zoroastrians, similarly, we have mostly only later, idealizing discussions and it is hard to know how much of the later rhetoric accurately reflects the actual conditions of a century and more earlier. We get a fuller picture, however, from the early writings of various Christian communities of the Near East, particularly those of Syria and Mesopotamia, which contain direct references to, and suggestive impressions of, their new rulers. For this reason, the discussion that follows will focus exclusively on relations between the Umayyads and various Christian communities; whether the experience of Christian communities can serve as a guide to the way other religious communities may have fared under the Umayyads must remain, for now, an open question.

Relations between the Umayyads and Christians can be divided into two discrete phases. The first extends from the beginning of Umayyad rule until about 692, a period when the Umayyad authorities adopted a benign policy toward Christians in general and when Christians are prominent in the Umayyad government. A new phase begins around 692; by this time the *amir al-muʾminin* ʿAbd al-Malik had defeated his rival ʿAbdullah b. al-Zubayr and finally secured his status as the sole ruler of the empire, and this development coincides with the adoption of a new official policy on the part of the Umayyad rulers. They appear henceforth to have emphasized ever more forcefully their identity as Muslims and to have imposed increasing restrictions and disabilities on the Christian populations they ruled. This shift in policy, however, was implemented only gradually (or perhaps intermittently, depending on the outlook of individual Umayyad rulers); and whatever the official policy, it seems clear that among the general population, those who identified themselves with the

Believers' movement, and were so identified by Christians in the general population, did not suddenly or irrevocably adopt an attitude of hostility toward Christians, but continued for many years to engage in a variety of constructive relations with them.

UMAYYADS AND CHRISTIANS BEFORE C. 690

The Umayyad dynasty is usually considered to have begun with the accession of Muʿawiya b. Abi Sufyan as *amir al-muʾminin* in 660 after the assassination of his rival ʿAli b. Abi Talib (r. 656–60) in Kufa during the first civil war: Muʿawiya passed power to his son Yazid (r. 680–3). (The first member of the Umayyad family to rule as *amir al-muʾminin* had actually been Muʿawiya's older second cousin ʿUthman b. ʿAffan (r. 644–56), a wealthy companion of the Prophet, who ruled like his predecessors from Medina until his assassination in 656, which triggered the first civil war.) Muʿawiya had first come to Syria as a young man and by 639 had become governor there. Early on, he established close ties in Syria, in particular through his alliance with the powerful Christian tribe of Kalb. This alliance was sealed through his marriage to Maysun, the daughter of the Kalb chief Bahdal b. Unayf. She bore him his son and successor, Yazid. Yazid was thus raised by a Christian mother, and himself married another princess of Kalb, also a Christian.[13] From their earliest days in Syria, then, the Umayyads were solidly allied with a powerful Christian tribe, which continued to serve their interests and shape their policies for many decades.

Various reports about Muʿawiya suggest that he had an open-minded attitude toward Christianity, or was at least remarkably curious about it. A Syriac text generally known as the *Maronite Chronicle*, of uncertain date but well informed about events in the seventh century,[14] notes that in 659 Muʿawiya had a theological debate between Jacobite bishops and representatives of the Maronite sect carried out in his presence. The Maronite chronicler claims that the Jacobites lost and were accordingly ordered by Muʿawiya 'to give up twenty thousand denarii and be silent. And it became customary for the Jacobite bishops to give Muʿawiya that [much] gold annually lest [his] protection of them slacken and they be punished by the [Maronite] clergy.'[15] It may be asked whether this report is historically factual, or whether it is a fabrication, an effort by the Maronite author of the text to use Muʿawiya's status as presumably impartial arbiter to score theological points against his Jacobite opposition.[16]

The East Syrian author John Bar Penkaye, writing in the late 680s in northern Mesopotamia, also has interesting, and mostly positive, things to say about Muʿawiya. After giving one of the earliest descriptions of Muhammad and his teachings, he describes how Muʿawiya emerged as leader:

> a man named Muʿawiya became king and took control of the kingdoms both of the Persians and of the Romans. Justice flourished in his days, and there was great peace in the regions he controlled. He allowed everyone to conduct himself as he wanted. For, as I said above, they upheld a certain commandment from him who was their guide concerning the Christian people and the monastic order. By this one's guidance, they also upheld the worship of one God, in accord with the customs of ancient law. And, at their beginning, they upheld the tradition of their

> instructor Muhammad such that they would bring the death penalty upon whoever seemed to have dared [transgress] his laws.
>
> Every year their raiders went to far-off countries and islands and brought [back] captives from every people under heaven. But from everyone they only demanded tribute. They allowed [each] to remain in whatever faith he wished, there being not a few Christians among them – some [aligned] with the heretics and some with us. But when Muʿawiya reigned, there was peace throughout the world whose like we have never heard of or seen, nor had our fathers or our fathers' fathers.[17]

There are a couple of points of interest in this account – besides its obviously favorable view of Muʿawiya's tolerance on religious matters. First, when John states 'there being not a few Christians among them' – some Miaphysite (West Syrian) 'heretics', and some, like himself, East Syrian – he seems to be saying clearly that the raiders unleashed by the Umayyads on 'every people under heaven' included Christians of various denominations; so were these Christians part of the Believers' movement? One might argue that these people were merely former Christians, converts who had joined the conquerors' religion and given up their own, but in that case, one would expect John to have referred to them as renegades, apostates, or to use some other negative term, not to call them simply Christians. His presentation suggests that an individual could be both a Christian and a member of the Believers' movement at the same time. The murkiness of communal borders in practical terms seems quite prominent here. Second, John refers his readers back to 'a certain commandment from him who was their guide concerning the Christian people and the monastic order'. Although the earlier passage implies (but does not quite say) that it was God who had prepared the Arabians to hold Christians and monks in honor,[18] the passage quoted above seems to say that this attitude came from 'him who was their guide', presumably a reference to Muhammad. Is John here referring to those passages in the Qurʾan that are positive toward Christians and monks? And were such Qurʾanic passages for some reason more central at this time to the Believers' (including the Umayyads') attitudes than Qurʾanic passages that are critical of Christianity? This positive attitude is also attested for the period preceding Muʿawiya's accession in 660. Writing in the 650s, the Catholicos of the East Syrian church, Ishoyabh III, describes the conquerors in a letter to one of his bishops as follows: 'Not only are they no enemy to Christianity, but they are even praisers of our faith, honorers of our Lord's priests and holy ones, and supporters of churches and monasteries.' But a few lines farther on, the Catholicos laments Christians who 'abandon their faith', which implies a clear-cut boundary between being a Christian and belonging to the Believers' movement.[19] Nonetheless, the letter suggests that the new regime was not inimical to Christians in principle, an attitude that seems to have continued under Muʿawiya.

Another text also suggests that Muʿawiya had some kind of special, albeit undefined, reverence for Christianity. The aforementioned *Maronite Chronicle* describes Muʿawiya's accession as *amir al-muʾminin* in 660 as follows: 'Many *tayyaye*[20] assembled in Jerusalem and made Muʿawiya king. He ascended and sat at Golgotha. He prayed there, went to Gethsemane, descended to the tomb of the blessed Mary, and prayed there.'[21] It is possible, of course, that this description is

mere fantasy, the pious hopes of a Maronite scribe who wished his new ruler to be a Christian, but that seems unlikely. The choice of Jerusalem as the location of Muʿawiya's coronation is itself interesting: Jerusalem was far from the largest town in Syria, nor was it a major center of settlement for the Believers – Hims, their main garrison town in Syria, would have been far more important in that sense. Gaza, Caesarea, Damascus, Bostra, and other towns would have been of much greater commercial significance. Given Jerusalem's central importance to both Judaism and Christianity, and its role as a focus of apocalyptic speculation in both traditions, the choice of this city for Muʿawiya's coronation suggests that he wished to give his rule some kind of religious significance. His performance of what appear to be some kind of rituals on Golgotha, site of Jesus' crucifixion, and at Mary's tomb, suggests a desire to honor aspects of the Christian tradition.[22] But the exact significance of his sitting at Golgotha, and praying there and in Mary's tomb, remains unclear; and, while Mary is mentioned in the Qurʾan with reverence, as is Jesus, it is puzzling that Muʿawiya should perform some kind of observance on Golgotha, inasmuch as the Qurʾan denies Jesus's death on the cross (as well as his divine nature).

The early Umayyads are known to have employed many Christians in their imperial administration. Since they took over much of the existing administrative apparatus and its personnel from the regimes they replaced, it is hardly surprising that lower-level Christian clerks were found in the bureaucracy of the early Umayyad regime (including many Coptic scribes in Egypt, whose identity is often marked, even in Arabic papyri they wrote, by their drawing a cross near the start of the document). But the uppermost levels of the early Umayyad civil administration were also sometimes in the hands of Christians. The Mansur family of Damascus, who had served the Byzantines and Sasanians as high administrators before the arrival of the Believers' movement, continued to provide this service under Muʿawiya and his son and successor Yazid, and indeed through the period of ʿAbd al-Malik as *amir al-muʾminin* (685–705). The most famous scion of this house was Mansur b. Sarjun b. Mansur, better known as St. John of Damascus, who after leaving state service retired to a monastery and wrote theological treatises, including one that offers the earliest extensive theological description of what he termed the 'heresy of the Ishmaelites'.[23]

The accession of Yazid I (r. 680–3) upon his father Muʿawiya's death does not seem to have brought a change in official policy toward Christians; we would hardly expect one given the fact that Yazid had been raised by a Christian mother and had a Christian wife. The presence of Christian troops in the Umayyad army Yazid dispatched to the Hijaz shortly before his death in an attempt to crush the rival *amir al-muʾminin* Ibn al-Zubayr is mentioned in the poetry of his (Christian) court poet, al-Akhtal,[24] and Mansur b. Sarjun headed his administration.

The close ties between the Umayyad house and the Syrian tribes, in particular the Kalb, played a crucial role in the Umayyads' continued hold on power following the death, in close succession, of Yazid in 683 and then his son Muʿawiya II a few months later. Upon the death of the latter it was not clear who should succeed to the throne and many, even some members of the Umayyad family, were inclined to recognize the claim of Ibn al-Zubayr in Mecca as *amir al-muʾminin*. But, with the encouragement of the Kalb chief Hassan b. Malik b. Bahdal, leaders of the Umayyad family met at Jabiya in the Jawlan region and elected to acclaim as their leader Marwan

b. al-Hakam, not a descendant of Muʿawiya but rather an elderly leader of a different branch of the Umayyad clan. In the face of considerable opposition in Syria, Marwan organized forces that defeated those favoring Ibn al-Zubayr decisively at the battle of Marj Rahit, near Damascus (684). In both Marwan's elevation to leadership of the Umayyad family, and in the victory at Marj Rahit some months later, then, the Christian tribe of Kalb and their leader Hassan played key, if complex, roles.[25]

In many ways, then, early Umayyad rule (particularly in Syria under Muʿawiya) seems to reflect a kind of symbiosis between the new regime and its many Christian subjects. The violence and disruption that marked the transfer of power from Byzantine and Sasanian control to the hegemony of the Arabian Believers during the 630s and 640s was followed by a period in which we might say that the Near East's Christians and their new rulers were 'sizing each other up', trying to determine the degree to which they could accept or rely on each other. It seems to have been a time when there was considerable uncertainty on both sides over just how different the newly arrived Believers were from the various Christian communities of the Near East, and many people (both in the Umayyad regime and among the subject population) appear to have been willing to work with people on the 'other side'.

Umayyad policy toward Christians did not change abruptly following Muʿawiya's death, but circumstances on the ground certainly did. The tranquility of the 20 years of Muʿawiya's rule, remarked upon by John Bar Penkaye, vanished during the 12 years of turbulence we usually call the Second Civil War (680–92), which had a devastating effect on everyone.[26] In places like northern Mesopotamia and Syria, Christian communities – certainly still the majority of the population there – suffered grievously from lawlessness, famine, and plague, as well as from roaming groups of rebels, brigands, and undisciplined military units. These elements were equal-opportunity predators who victimized local populations mercilessly simply because they were there; their identity as Christians or something else was not at issue. John Bar Penkaye provides a moving account of the tribulations of this time, with special condemnation for 'the plunderers' who followed people fleeing plague and famine: 'They would cast them from their hiding places, tear away their possessions, and leave them naked.'[27]

THE UMAYYADS AND CHRISTIANS *C.* 692–750

A definite shift in Umayyad policy towards Christians takes place in the reign of ʿAbd al-Malik (r. 685–705), and first becomes visible around 692. That year marked the end of the Second Civil War and the final victory of ʿAbd al-Malik over his rival Ibn al-Zubayr; it also marked ʿAbd al-Malik's construction on Mount Moriah in Jerusalem of the splendid octagonal building called the Dome of the Rock. Among the building's many striking features, the interior mosaics are particularly noteworthy because they contain a selection of passages from the Qurʾan that are critical of basic Christian concepts such as the divinity of Jesus and his status as God's son. Given their location in the interior of the building, these inscriptions were unlikely to have been visible to the general public in ʿAbd al-Malik's day; nevertheless, the choice of verses suggests that ʿAbd al-Malik and his advisers were consciously attempting to differentiate between their beliefs – which, following the inscriptions, we can now begin to call simply 'Islam' – and some of the central doctrines of Christianity.[28] We

can view the building of the Dome of the Rock as the beginning of the Umayyads' campaign to make public displays of Islam – which also meant reducing the public display of other claims to religious authority, particularly those of the hitherto dominant Christians.[29]

Other measures taken by ʿAbd al-Malik also suggest the arrival of a newly confrontational attitude toward Christians, or at least a renewed zeal in applying restrictions to the display of certain Christian symbols, particularly the cross, condemnation of which is mentioned in scattered reports extending all the way back to the Prophet's first successors in the 630s.[30] The *Zuqnin Chronicle* notes that ʿAbd al-Malik ordered a census of all inhabitants and their property in 691, followed by the imposition of the *jizya* or poll-tax on non-Muslims.[31] Michael the Syrian (d. 1199), a much later author but presumably relying on earlier writers, notes that ʿAbd al-Malik ordered the breaking of publicly visible crosses throughout Syria.[32] Two earlier sources, the *Chronicle of 819* and the fragmentary *Secular Chronicle of Dionysius of Tel-Mahre*, note that ʿAbd al-Malik ordered the killing of all the pigs in Syria and Mesopotamia, apparently in 703.[33] This act seems to reflect the adoption by the Umayyads of a stance more self-consciously in conformity with the Qurʾan's dictates; it is not necessarily to be understood as primarily anti-Christian, but since Christians were undoubtedly the main consumers of pork in the Near East, the slaughtering of all swine must have been a harsh blow to the economic welfare and diet of Christian communities.

Even on the official level, however, the shift of ʿAbd al-Malik away from Christianity and Christians was not complete. He continued to employ as the head of his bureaucracy in Damascus the Christian Mansur b. Sarjun (later Saint John of Damascus). He also assigned a prominent Christian notable from Edessa, Athanasius Bar Gumoye, to be effective head of administration in Egypt for his brother, ʿAbd al-ʿAziz, whom he appointed governor of Egypt although he was still a minor. Athanasius remained in that position until ʿAbd al-ʿAziz's death, less than a year before ʿAbd al-Malik's own in 705.[34] So ʿAbd al-Malik does not seem to have suddenly turned against important Christian administrators he had appointed.

ʿAbd al-Malik's son and successor as *amir al-muʾminin*, al-Walid I (r. 705–15), upon his accession seized the churches of Damascus, including the Church of St. John, which he had demolished and rebuilt as a mosque (the famous Umayyad Mosque in the center of the city).[35] This marks the beginning of an increasing trend among the Umayyads to impose restrictions on Christians, and periodically to confiscate some of their property. In Egypt, such restrictions were often not a result of official policy, but rather the result of rival Christian factions calling on the authorities to punish another for some misdeed.[36] Moreover, as noted previously, this trend was gradual, inconsistently applied, and certain instances of restrictions may not be as surely historical as once thought.

A particularly significant case involves the policies attributed to the Umayyad *amir al-muʾminin* ʿUmar (II) b. ʿAbd al-ʿAziz (r. 717–20). Renowned for his piety – a reputation that Syriac sources show was already established within a decade of his death[37] – ʿUmar, in his short reign, is said to have been the author of two major policy initiatives, both of which had significant implications for Christians and other non-Muslims.

One of these is the so-called 'Fiscal Rescript', which aimed to address the problem created when non-Muslims subject to the poll-tax (*jizya*) embraced Islam.[38] If these

new Muslims, usually called *mawali* or clients, were freed from payment of the *jizya*, the revenues of the government would decline. In addition, land subject to land tax would be abandoned by new Muslims since they could no longer be considered tied to the land by virtue of their status as conquered non-Muslims, which would cause tax revenues to decline even more – and we know, from documentary sources, that there was a serious problem of abandonment of lands by peasants in the later Umayyad period, a problem that led governors to issue passports for individuals who had paid their tax,[39] or to adopt draconian measures, such as branding or tattooing peasants with the name of their village.[40] If, on the other hand, new Muslims were forced to continue paying the *jizya*, glaring inequities in tax liability would emerge within the Muslim community itself. The Rescript tackles this question, but its text offers no clear solution to the problems of land abandonment and revenue decline. Moreover, given the brevity of ʿUmar's reign and the lack of evidence of any reaction to the Rescript, it is not clear that it was ever implemented or had any effect. In addition, the fact that the Rescript is only known from the juristic literature of the late eighth and ninth centuries, when it was used as a source of precedent, coupled with the Umayyad-era silence about it, raises the possibility that no such Rescript was ever actually issued by ʿUmar II, but is rather an invention of later jurists seeking to legitimate their systematization of tax law by projecting aspects of them back to the supposed rulings of a ruler renowned for his piety. Which possibility is the truer remains, for the present, difficult to discern.[41]

A similar situation surrounds another measure attributed to ʿUmar II, and one most relevant to the present discussion: his edict barring non-Muslims from employment in the Umayyad government and imposing restrictive dress on them (the so-called *ghiyar*). This document has been cited by scholars to argue that these restrictions, even if not enforced at the time, served as a model for the later implementation of far-reaching restrictions on non-Muslims during the Abbasid period.[42] It has, however, also been argued cogently that this edict too is a product of later juristic discussions, projected back upon ʿUmar II;[43] it thus remains unclear whether the pious ʿUmar II actually did ban non-Muslims from the government and impose dress restrictions on them.

The contradictions surrounding ʿUmar II are found also in the Syriac sources that mention him. On the one hand, the Syriac *Chronicle of 819*, under the year 1028 of the Seleucid Era (716–17 CE), describes ʿUmar's accession as follows: 'Sulayman himself died at the Meadow of Dabiq in September and ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-'Aziz b. Marwan reigned after him for two years and seven months, (a good man) and a king more merciful than [all those] who had preceded him.'[44] This thoroughly positive assessment by a Christian chronicler makes ʿUmar II seem an unlikely candidate for the anti-Christian measures attributed to him by later Muslim tradition. On the other hand, a reconstruction of part of the lost chronicle of Dionysius of Tel-Mahre, Jacobite patriarch from 818 to 845, states of ʿUmar II that he was 'a good and a merciful man, a lover of truth and justice and one who avoided evil; but in his enmity towards the Christians he outdid all his predecessors.'[45] The curiously bipolar character of this passage from Dionysius, however, arouses our suspicion: how could a bishop of the church who knew ʿUmar to exceed all his predecessors in enmity to Christians, nonetheless start his description of him by saying that he was 'a good and a merciful man, a lover of truth and justice and one who avoided evil'? One would

think that enmity toward Christians would be, in Dionysius's eyes, the epitome of evil and injustice. Since the reconstruction of Dionysius relies mainly on the *Chronicle* of Michael the Syrian (late thirteenth century) and the *Chronicle of 1234*,[46] it seems very likely that it is actually a composite of something Dionysius may actually have written – the first, positive, segment, which parallels closely the text of the *Chronicle of 819*, contemporary with Dionysius – to which a negative comment was added by some later copyist, living under the much more restrictive conditions imposed by the Abbasids, and perhaps influenced by Abbasid-era Muslim jurists, who legitimated their policies by tracing them back to measures supposedly promulgated by the pious ʿUmar II.

As noted, however, even if we cannot be sure when various restrictions on Christians first came to be implemented, there is no question of the general trend towards greater restriction, which came to full fruition by the mid-ninth century in the decree of the Abbasid caliph al-Mutawakkil (r. 847–61).[47] Indicative of this shift is the fact that the term *ahl al-dhimma*, the standard term used to refer to non-Muslims subordinated to Islamic law, does not appear in the Egyptian papyri before the eighth century (the first dated instance is 789).[48]

Whatever the situation in terms of official restrictions imposed on Christians by the later Umayyads, however, evidence especially from Christian sources of the late seventh and early eighth centuries show that there continued to be, 'on the ground', constructive and sometimes intimate interactions between Christians and those people whom we can after 700 call, with ever greater confidence, simply Muslims, generally still identified in the Syriac sources as *tayyaye* ('camel-nomads', Arabians) or *mhaggraye* (presumably reflecting the Arabic *muhajirun*, 'emigrants', sometimes pejoratively construed as 'descendants of Hagar' or 'Hagarenes').

For example, in the writings of the Miaphysite bishop Jacob of Edessa (bishop 684–708), we find several that speak explicitly of Christian-Muslim interactions. In his correspondence with John the Stylite, Jacob is asked how to handle the case of a person who, having been a Christian, joined the 'Hagarenes', but then returned to his original Christian community. John expresses no particular surprise or outrage that this should have happened, implying that such shifts may not have been uncommon, but seeks guidance on whether the returnee needed to be re-baptised.[49]

In another of his letters to John, Jacob emphasizes the common doctrinal ground shared by Christians and 'Hagarenes', in that they both accept Jesus as son of Mary, in the line of David, and 'that he is the Christ who was to come', in contradistinction to the Jews, who accept none of these things.[50] Jacob makes it clear that it is allowable and right for Christian priests to give blessings to Muslims or pagans who are 'possessed by evil spirits'.[51] Jacob also receives an interesting query from one of his priests, who asks him what to do in the case of a Christian woman who has married a *mhaggar* and wants to receive the Eucharist from the priest. Particularly striking is the fact that, the priest reports, the Muslim husband has threatened to kill him if he refuses to give his wife the Eucharist.[52] In this case, then, we see a Muslim who is deeply concerned that his wife continue to receive a Christian sacrament.

Another Syriac text (probably of the late seventh century), the still-unpublished *Life of Theodute*, who was bishop of Amida (modern Diyarbekr) in the late seventh century, describes how *tayyaye* gathered in the church to attend Theodute's ordination as bishop, listen to his preaching, and follow his injunctions. The text also

describes how the local governor seeks Theodute's blessing, and states that the governor of Dara helped him build a new monastery.[53]

Archaeological evidence shows that major congregational mosques in cities were often founded adjacent to, or on the grounds of, the city's main church, and also sometimes suggests that Christians shared worship space with Believers/Muslims. The Kathisma Church near Jerusalem, for example, rebuilt sometime in the Umayyad period, had a normal east-facing apse, but also included a *mihrab* or prayer-niche in its south wall, suggesting that both Christian and Muslim communities prayed there.[54]

Relations were not always so harmonious, of course, even on a popular level; in one of his letters, Jacob of Edessa tells a priest that it is better to close the church doors when celebrating the Eucharist, lest the *mhaggraye* mingle with the Christians, 'disturb them, and ridicule the holy mysteries'.[55] But, as we have seen, there is plentiful evidence that Muslims and Christians (and perhaps other non-Muslims) enjoyed much contact that was constructive, not antagonistic. From such evidence, one suspects that the attitude of Christian clerics – who wrote most of the Christian sources on which we rely, and who were more concerned with theological issues than were the silent masses – may have been more antagonistic than the majority of people in the communities they led.

One reason for the Umayyad government's relatively easy policy toward Christians (and other non-Muslims) may have been the simple fact that, in the seventh century and well into the eighth, the Arabian Believers or Muslims were a decided minority, indeed for long a small minority, in the lands they ruled, which was populated in Syria, Mesopotamia, and Egypt overwhelmingly by Christians, and in Iran, by Zoroastrians. It was only in the tenth century, probably, that Muslims became the majority of the population, via a gradual process of conversion.[56]

Another factor that may have contributed to the government's relatively easy policy was the fact that for many people, it was for some time not entirely clear just how different, at least in doctrinal terms, the new conquerors from Arabia really were from the long-resident populations of the Near East; as we have seen, Islam's doctrinal and confessional distinctiveness only began to become sharply defined in the last decade of the seventh century. Even some decades later, John of Damascus, having left Umayyad service and taken up monastic life, could describe the creed of his former employers as the 'heresy of the Ishmaelites' – suggesting that it was not clear, even to him, that these 'Ishmaelites' represented a totally new religion.[57] It has been argued that contact with the new Believers/Muslims, and the reference in Christian sources to Muslim rulers, helped Christian thinkers more clearly define their own faith and communities.[58] It seems equally possible that contact between the Believers and Christians was one of the key factors that contributed to the formation of a clear Muslim identity in the late seventh and eighth centuries, and beyond.

Despite the fact that eventually Christianity and Islam did separate from each other decisively, it appears that for much of the Umayyad period, and perhaps for some time after the fall of the Umayyads in 750, individuals who identified primarily with various Christian communities and those belonging to the community of Believers-becoming-Muslims managed to live together, often in relative harmony. As one scholar has recently put it: 'Syriac Christians ate with Muslims, married Muslims, bequeathed estates to Muslim heirs, taught Muslim children, and were soldiers in

Muslim armies.'[59] As we have seen, at various times, they shared worship spaces with Muslims, served as high advisers to Umayyad rulers, received material support from Muslims, and saw their bishops honored by Muslim governors. However contentious and oppressive Muslim rule may eventually have become for Christians, it would be misleading to assume that systematic hostility was characteristic of the Umayyad period.

NOTES

1 Déroche 2014; Sinai 2014.
2 On different approaches to the traditional Islamic origins narrative, see Donner 1998: 1–31.
3 Smith 1963.
4 Donner 2002–3; Donner 2010.
5 For example, Qurʾan 2:62; 3:199; 5:69. For discussion of these and other passages see Donner 2002–3: 17–24.
6 On the 'Constitution', see Lecker 2004, with references to earlier scholarship.
7 Thomson 1999: I:103.
8 On this issue see Donner 2011.
9 Ragib 2007.
10 See two examples cited in Hoyland 1997a: 690 (no. 7) and 692 (no. 16).
11 Kessler 1970; Donner 2019. A tombstone dated to year 71 (691 CE) mentions 'ahl al-islām' (see El-Hawary 1932), but this is probably to be read 171, as suggested by Hoyland 1997b: 87 fn 65, and Lindstedt (forthcoming), Appendix no. 15, who suggests it might even be short for year 271.
12 Tannous 2013; also Sizgorich 2009: 21–45.
13 *EI2*, 'Bahdal b. Unayf' (H. Lammens); *EI2*, 'Hassan b. Malik' (H. Lammens and L. Veccia-Vaglieri); *EI2*, 'Kalb b. Wabara. I. Pre-Islamic Period' (J. W. Fück); *EI2*, 'Kalb b. Wabara. II. Islamic Period' (A. A. Dixon).
14 On its date, see Hoyland 1997a: 136–9; Penn 2015b: 56–7.
15 Translation from Penn 2015b: 57; compare Hoyland 1997a: 135; Palmer 1993: 30–1.
16 Penn 2015a: 139–40 raises the issue of Muslims appearing as tropes in Syriac intra-Christian theological polemics.
17 Translation from Penn 2015b: 92; compare Hoyland 1997a: 196; Brock 1987: 61.
18 See Penn 2015b: 88–9; Hoyland 1997a: 196.
19 Penn 2015b: 36; compare Hoyland 1997a: 181.
20 Syriac *tayyaye* means something like 'nomads of the desert' and is often used in Syriac for the people who called themselves in Arabic Believers (*muʾminun*). Penn translates it here and elsewhere as 'Arabs', but I have changed it to the original Syriac as I consider the translation 'Arabs' to be misleading. See Donner 2018.
21 Penn 2015b: 58; Hoyland 1997a: 136 and Palmer 1993: 31 also translate *tayyaye* here as 'Arabs'.
22 On Muʿawiya's coronation in Jerusalem and its meaning, see Marsham 2013.
23 On the Mansur family see Griffith 2016; Auzépy 1994: 193–204. The classic study of John of Damascus's treatise on the Ismaelites is Sahas 1972.
24 Lammens 1911–12: 229.
25 *EI2*, 'Mardj Rahit' (N. Elisséeff); *EI2*, 'Hassan b. Malik' (H. Lammens); Sellheim 1970: 102–3; Rotter 1982: 133–51.
26 On the second civil war, see Rotter 1982; Dixon 1971; Sellheim 1970.
27 Penn 2015b: 102; compare Hoyland 1997a: 199; Brock 1987: 68–9.
28 On the inscriptions, see Kessler 1970; Donner 2010: 232–5; Donner 2019.

29 On this process see Griffith 1992.
30 See a summary of such reports in Griffith 1992; in many cases, the reliability of those reports referring to events prior to the time of ʿAbd al-Malik remains to be ascertained, since they often come from much later sources and may be back-projections.
31 Palmer 1993: 60. (Dated to 1003 of the Seleucid Era/691–2 CE in the chronicle.)
32 Summarized in Griffith 1992: 125–8.
33 Palmer 1993: 78 and 204–5.
34 On Athanasius, see Debié 2016. On ʿAbd al-ʿAziz's long governorship in Egypt, see Mabra 2017.
35 Noted in a fragment attributed to Dionysius of Tel-Mahré; Palmer 1993: 208. On this monument see Flood 2001.
36 Wilfong 1998: 182.
37 On this see Borrut 2011: 283–320.
38 The classic study of it is Gibb 1955.
39 Grohmann 1938: 119–21.
40 Kennedy 1998: 73; Robinson 2005.
41 See discussion of the Rescript in Hawting 1987: 77–81.
42 The most detailed work of this kind is Levy-Rubin 2011: esp. 88–98. A summary of her findings is presented in Levy-Rubin 2016.
43 Yarbrough 2016.
44 Palmer 1993: 80. Presumably the phrase 'a good man' is restored by the translator from the nearly identical text of the Chronicle of 846, see Palmer 1993: 75.
45 Palmer 1993: 99 n. 240.
46 On the reconstruction, see Palmer 1993: 85–104.
47 Levy-Rubin 2011: 99–100 and below.
48 Omar 2013: 163.
49 Penn 2015b: 168.
50 Penn 2015b: 170–1.
51 Penn 2015b: 167–8.
52 Penn 2015b: 164–5; Hoyland 1997a: 604–5.
53 These points summarized in Penn 2015b: 141–2. An edition and translation of the text are being prepared by Andrew Palmer and Jack Tannous, see Penn 2015b: 142.
54 On the location of congregational mosques see Guidetti 2013; on the Kathisma church, see Di Segni 2003: 248.
55 Second Letter to John Stylite #9, in Penn 2015b: 169.
56 The only systematic study is Bulliet 1979.
57 See Sahas 1972.
58 Penn 2015a: esp. 102–41.
59 Penn 2015b: 7.

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CHAPTER THREE

PROPHETIC DOMINION, UMAYYAD KINGSHIP
Varieties of *mulk* in the early Islamic period

Sean W. Anthony

INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, research into titles assumed by the early rulers of the early Islamic polity has uncovered a rather surprising finding. Looking merely to the documentary evidence (such as coins, papyri, inscriptions, and graffiti), one finds that the rulers of the early Islamic polity assumed two official titles, but the title 'caliph' (*khalifa*) was not one of them until the reign of ʿAbd al-Malik b. Marwan (r. 685/692–705). Even with the reign of ʿAbd al-Malik, 'caliph' can by no means be regarded as the dominant official title of the rulers of the early Islamic polity. Rather, a ruler was known in official documents and inscriptions as *ʿabd Allah*, usually in front of his given name, and, after his name, *amir al-muʾminin*.[1] That is, the ruler was first God's slave (*ʿabd*) and, second, a military commander (*amir*) of the faithful believers (*al-muʾminin*). *Amir* in many ways is directly parallel with the Roman title *imperator*, whence the English 'emperor', inasmuch as both titles simply meant a powerful military commander in their archaic sense. It is the addition of a host of believers as the military leader's force that makes the title *amir al-muʾminin* distinctively Islamic.

The piety and militarism of these early Islamic titles are, of course, striking, but equally striking in the titulature is the break with regional precedents. The rulers of the early Islamic polity rejected the imperial titulature of the Byzantines and Sasanians in their inscriptions, monuments, and coinage. The rulers did not claim to be *shahanshah*, 'the king of kings', on the Sasanian model, and they avoided the title of 'king' in official proclamations just after the Byzantine emperor Heraclius had adopted the Greek title *basileus*, or 'king', as an official title, thus codifying a long-standing vernacular precedent of referring to Roman emperors a 'kings'.[2] Where influence on titles does appear, it is the early Islamic titulature that seems to influence its neighbors rather than the other way around. Hence, even in the pietistic, royal titulature of Byzantium, one must wait until the first reign of Justinian II (685–95) until an emperor deigns to call himself *servus Christi*, 'servant of Christ', on his coinage,[3] just as a Muslim ruler would refer to himself as *ʿabd Allah*, 'servant of God'.

One of the reasons that this finding is surprising is that early Arabic historical narratives and other literary sources – such as poetry and oratory – paint a different picture of the titles chosen by the rulers of the Islamic polity. Most conspicuously, titles that connote the ruler's vicarious kingship vis-à-vis God's sovereignty, which are either rare or absent in the documentary record – especially titles like 'caliph (*khalifa*)' and 'shadow of God (*zill Allah*)' – are much more prevalent. Yet, such a division between literary and official titles is notably characteristic for Byzantine sources as well.[4] Where the documentary and literary sources do converge, however, is on the point that the official titulature used for rulers in the early Islamic polity marked a distinct departure from regional precedents. Perhaps no example of this is as vivid as these rulers' rejection of the title of 'king' (Ar. *malik*).

The title *malik* was not unknown to pre-Islamic Arabia and the Arabian tribesmen who populated the post-conquest elite of the early Islamic polity – to the contrary, the title *malik* is widely attested in the epigraphic record of the Arabian Peninsula for a period stretching over a millennium prior to the Islamic conquests. However, when Muslim sovereigns adopted their titles, they broke from this ancient precedent.[5] Early Muslim historians asserted that the reason that they called their ideal rulers *amir*s rather than 'kings' is that *amir*s and kings were rulers of an entirely different sort. According to a saying attributed to the Companion Abu Musa al-Ashʿari (d. *c.* AH 48/688 CE), 'The power of an *amir* is in his ability to command, but the power of a king is in his ability to conquer with the sword (*al-imra ma 'tamara fiha fa-inna l-mulk ma ghalaba ʿalayhi bi-l-sayf*).'[6]

Syriac-speaking chroniclers of the Eastern Christian communities who first witnessed the arrival of the new power in their lands noted the change, too, even if they still referred to their new rulers as 'kings' (Syriac, *malke*) in their language. A seventh-century chronicler described Muʿawiya b. Abi Sufyan's (r. 661–80) assumption of power in Jerusalem as follows:

> the commanders (*amire*) and many Arabs gathered and offered the oath of allegiance (*yamina*) to Muʿawiya. Then an order went out that he should be proclaimed king (*malka*) in all the villages and cities under his rule (*šūltaneh*) … Furthermore, Muʿāwiya did not wear a crown (*klila*) like other kings in the world. He placed his throne (*kursayeh*) in Damascus and refused to go to Muhammad's throne.[7]

While the Syriac chronicler regards Muʿawiya as a king, the chronicler notes that the ceremonial surrounding his rise to power was distinct: though he sat upon a (new) throne, he refused to wear a crown like other kings. He was a ruler of different sort.

Because the title 'king' (*malik*) was excluded from the official repertoire of early Islamic rulers, modern historians have often also claimed that that the Arabic concept of *mulk*, taken to mean 'kingship', was likewise rejected as a model for the rule of the Islamic polity. Polemical propaganda directed against the Umayyad caliphs often blamed them for the devolution of the caliphate (*al-khilafa*) into kingship (*al-mulk*). The Umayyads, the old polemic goes, were 'caliphs' only in name, but in truth they were the worst sort of rulers: kings (*muluk*). In their enemies' eyes, the only thing that exceeded the audacity of Umayyad impiety was their audacity to claim to rule as sublime caliphs who – in the words of one their

most debauched dynasts Walīd II (assassinated in 744) – ruled 'on the model of prophecy (*ʿala minhaj al-nubuwwa*)',[8] all while persecuting the truly pious and shedding the blood of Prophet's kin.[9]

Hence, it is common to find modern historians portraying the concept of *mulk* as something that early Muslims despised in the most absolute terms. Umayyad caliphs were so loathed, the argument often runs, because they reintroduced *mulk* into the early Islamic polity. Or, as one scholar has recently written,

> In the early Islamic centuries *mulk* was used as a term of condemnation to distinguish between the man-made impious and arbitrary rule of worldly sovereigns and the just and divine rule of caliphs. So while the era of the Orthodox Caliphs was referred to as *khilafa*, symbolizing justice and piety, the reign of the Umayyads was dismissed as *mulk*, a term carrying connotations of usurpations and oppression.[10]

Mulk is thus depicted as merely a counter-factual idea marshalled by early Muslims to distinguish the autocratic governance of kings and emperors from caliphal authority (*khilafa*). As Patricia Crone summarizes the classic distinction, '*imāma/khilāfa* stood for theocracy, government by God, whereas *mulk* stood for autocracy, government by selfish, arbitrary, and shortsighted human beings'.[11]

This account of *mulk* ties up the relationship of early Islamic rulers to *mulk* rather neatly, but it has fundamental drawbacks and stands in need of a corrective. Most glaringly, this account of *mulk* fails to make sense of the broader usages of *mulk* in early Islamic political discourse. Indeed, this understanding renders incoherent many usages of the term *mulk* in the early Islamic period. What, for instance, does one do with references to Muhammad's prophetic *mulk*? Take the following *hadith* where Muhammad describes a visionary experience:

> My Lord laid out the Earth before me from its eastern to western horizons; truly the dominion of my community (*mulk ummati*) shall reach all that God laid out before me.[12]

The promised *mulk* of Muhammad's community is certainly not a promise of the universal tyranny; it is a mandate given to the Prophet's *umma* for universal rule, and presumably one that is just and righteous. Here, *mulk* approximates to what today we would call 'empire'. *Mulk* of this type appears in another famous tradition in which the early Jewish convert to Islam, Kaʿb al-Ahbar, relates the prophecy of Muhammad's advent in the Torah:

> It is written in the Torah: Muhammad is my chosen servant. He is neither crude nor coarse, nor does he raise his voice in the streets (*aswaq*). He shall not repay evil with evil, but rather with clemency and forgiveness [compare Is. 42:1ff.]. His birthplace is in Mecca, his place of refuge in Tayba [that is to say, Medina], and his dominion in Syria.[13]

Following a loose citation of the biblical Isaiah, Kaʿb's tradition offers a tripartite division of the prophet's destiny, a destiny to be fulfilled in a future dominion in Syria, where the Umayyads later established their powerbase as caliphs. Again, *mulk* cannot be tyranny here, but must be something else.

The '*mulk* as tyranny/autocracy/kingship' trope runs into other problems, too. The common view of *mulk* as tyranny and, therefore, antithetical to caliphal rule also renders much of Umayyad courtly life unintelligible. Umayyad constructions from Qusayr ʿAmra to Khirbat al-Mafjar are awash with the imagery of kingship and royal dominion, and a vocabulary of royal dominion suffuses the verses of their court poets.[14] Hence, it was to honor, not to impugn, the memory of the young Yazid II b. ʿAbd al-Malik that the Umayyad poet Jarir declared in his dirge at the caliph's death in 724:

> Wrapped in the raiment of dominion (*sirbala mulkin*) freely granted (*ghayra mughtasabin*).
>
> Before the man of thirty dominion was of mixed lineage (*inna la-mulk muʾtashib*).[15]

As Garth Fowden has noted, 'The Umayyads … and their courtiers were wholly at ease with the vocabulary of kingship.'[16] It would be a mistake to cast the Umayyad caliphs as rather feckless rulers who were mostly on their back foot while attempting to articulate their own discourse of political legitimacy. The Umayyads did not have tin ear to the debates over politically legitimate rulership; rather, they actively shaped that discourse into its earliest, recognizably 'Islamic' form. 'Without the contributions of the Umayyads', notes Fred Donner, 'it seems doubtful whether Islam, as we recognize it today, would even exist' – an assertion that remains equally true for the religio-political discourse of early Islamic legitimism.[17]

Why else would the Umayyad caliph Muʿawiya reputedly express being content when scorned as a king?[18] He chose to cite in his defense the succession of the Israelites' King David, whom the Qurʾan calls a caliph, by a righteous king, his son Solomon. According to another story, it was the Prophet's grandson, al-Hasan b. ʿAli, who first counseled Muʿawiya to emulate the kingship (*mulk*) of the Israelites' king Solomon.[19] Thus, Muʿawiya reputedly boasted, 'I am the first king and the last caliph' (*ana awwalu malikin wa-akhiru khalifa*).[20]

For reasons stated above and many more to be addressed below, I would like to suggest that the once useful historical cliché about *mulk* being the antithesis of *khilafa* has outlived its utility. Rather than illuminating the political ideologies of the early Islamic polity, it has now, instead, come to obscure the continuities between how the early Islamic polity articulated its legitimacy and its predecessor empires.[21] Against the recent trend among some historians to view *mulk* in exclusively negative terms and to hold that early Muslims regarded *mulk* as the worst sort of government, I contend that a closer examination reveals that *mulk* was not broadly construed as the antithesis of the Islamic polity. Rather, *mulk* was construed as its very foundation.

MULK IN THE NEGATIVE

To reconstruct the story of *mulk* in its full complexity requires first an account of the origins of the anti-Umayyad polemic inasmuch as this polemic has often been cast as pre-Umayyad and reflective of the most archaic forms of Muslim religiosity. Crone located negative attitudes toward *mulk* in three sources that converged in the anti-Umayyad polemic: 1) an ancient monotheistic tradition that exalted God as the sole true king; 2) an Arabian tradition of rejecting the rule of kings, and 3) anti-Umayyad sentiment cultivated by a pietistic opposition who regarded the dynasty as usurpers who perverted the pristine ideal of prophetic and caliphal rule. Of these three, the third proves to be the strongest and most compelling source of the polemic.[22]

It is notable that Crone does not mention the Qurʾan as a direct source of this critique of Umayyad *mulk*. The justification for excluding the Qurʾan is strong and also provides us our first glimpse beyond the historians' cliché about *mulk*. The Qurʾan evinces neither a strong condemnation of *mulk* as evil nor does it issue a blanket denunciation of kings (*muluk*; sing. *malik*). That the designation 'king/ruler' (*malik*) does not carry an inherently negative connotation in the Qurʾān is immediately apparent insofar as God himself is designated as a *malik* at least five times. The Qurʾan calls God 'the true king' (*al-malik al-haqq*) (Q. 20:114), 'the holy king' (*al-malik al-quddus*) (Q. 59:23, 62:1), and 'the king of humanity' (*malik al-nas*) (Q. 114:2). 'King' is not merely a divine epithet either, but applies to righteous humans as well. God commands Moses to remind the Israelites of 'the grace (*niʿma*) God bestowed on them' when He placed prophets in their midst and 'made you into kings' (Q. 5:20). Of all the Israelite kings, the Qurʾan explicitly confers the epithet of *malik* only to Saul (Q. 2:246–7); however, the scripture speaks positively of the *mulk* of Joseph in Egypt (Q. 12:101) and the *mulk* of Israelite kings, such as David and Solomon (Q. 2:102, 251). David is even called a caliph (*khalifa*) with *mulk* (Q. 38:20, 26), suggesting that the being a *khalifa* and a *malik* were more or less synonymous in the Qurʾanic idiom.[23] 'Lord, pardon my sins and grant me dominion (*wa-hab li mulkan*) not to be surpassed by anyone after me,' the Qurʾanic Solomon successfully beseeches God (Q. 38:35). Most importantly, perhaps, the Qurʾan avers that God has given the entire progeny of Abraham 'a glorious dominion' (*mulk ʿazim*) (Q. 4:53) – a verse we shall revisit below.

The most negative evaluation of kings in the Qurʾan – perhaps not without irony – comes from lips of a queen addressing a king. Thus, when the Queen of Sheba arrives at Solomon's court, she declares to the Israelite king, 'Kings, when they enter a town, bring it to ruin and humiliate its honored denizens' (Q. 27:34; Q. 18:79). While this verse certainly paints kingship in a negative light – much like its biblical counterpart in 1 Samuel 8:10–20 – this amounts not so much to a withering criticism of kingship and a rejection of its legitimacy as to a mere matter-of-fact description of political reality. Two other passages of the Qurʾan do hint of the dangers that come with *mulk* and its temptations. In Q. 43: 51, the tyrannical Pharaoh boasts to his subjects, 'Do I not possess dominion over Egypt and these rivers that run beneath me?' and thus reveals his arrogant impiety. In Q. 20:120, Iblis tempts Adam and his spouse not merely with the tree of eternal life (*shajarat al-khuld*) but with undying dominion (*mulk la yabla*). Yet even here the point is not so much that *mulk* is evil as much as the arrogance of not recognizing the true source of life and *mulk*: God's

providential dispensation. Hence, with regard to *mulk*, the message of the Qurʾan is to affirm God as the ultimate 'sovereign of [all] dominion (*malik al-mulk*)'. Dominion is providentially distributed throughout the course of human history to whomever God wills: 'You grant dominion to whom You will and take dominion from whom You will just as You exalt whom You will and humble whom You will' (Q. 3:26).

The Qurʾan offers, therefore, a reprise of ancient monotheistic themes of God as the cosmogonic king developed in the Hebrew Bible, early Christianity, and even Pythagorean and Stoic political philosophy insofar as *mulk* joins *hikma*, or wisdom, in the Qurʾan's ideal kings (for example, Q. 2:251).[24] The Psalms and the Qurʾan strongly reject the sacrality of earthly kings by associating true kingship with God and by specifying that kingship is bestowed on men only through a divine dispensation. In both traditions, divine kingship is expressed through the royal imagery of enthronement (Q. 2:255; Psalms 47, 93–9), and the affirmation of divine sovereignty is cosmological and eschatological (for example, Q. 22:56, 25:26; cf. Ps. 24:1 f., 7 ff.; Exodus 15:17–18).[25] The Qurʾan speaks of God's dominion as manifest in his 'kingdom' (*malkut*). God's *malkut* is the entire cosmos, 'the [divine] kingdom of the heavens and the earth' (*malkut al-samawat wa-l-ard*) (Q. 6:75, 7:185) and encompasses all created things: 'in his hand resides the [divine] kingdom of all things' (*bi-yadihi malkutu kulli shayʾ*) (Q. 23:88, Yāsīn 36:83). Of course, the Qurʾanic *malkut* closely resembles cognate notions drawn from ancient monotheistic themes the biblical tradition (Hebrew, *malkut*; cf. 1 Chr 29:11, 30; Ezra 1:1 f.) and strongly resonates with the New Testament notion of 'the kingdom of God' (Greek, *basileia tou theou*/Syriac *malkuteh d-alaha*) and 'the kingdom of heaven' (*basileia ton ouranon/malkuta dašmaya*).[26] However, in the Qurʾan *malkut* is exclusively divine and never human.

This Qurʾanic data is important for a number of reasons. First, it represents the fundamental vocabulary of early Islamic piety whose salience remains unmitigated with the passage of time: *malik* and its plural *muluk*, meaning 'king(s)' or 'ruler(s)', are applied to both God and men;[27] *mulk*, 'sovereignty' or 'dominion', is possessed by God and granted to specific persons and peoples; and *malkut* is the all-encompassing realm of divine dominion and sovereignty. This baseline of Qurʾanic data strongly suggest that the connotations of *mulk* are essentially neutral and bereft of a blanket condemnation *mulk* as unjust or tyrannical.[28]

Hostility to kings and kingly rule has also long been conflated with the egalitarian social structure of the tribes of the Arabian Peninsula, a perception with ancient roots in Roman-era depictions of Arabian warriors and marauders.[29] Yet, it is another question altogether as to whether or not this allegedly ancient aversion to hierarchy fed into the polemics against Umayyad *mulk*. To imagine that the tribes of the Arabian Peninsula knew no hierarchy would be a grave mistake, as tribal leadership manifested in many hierarchical forms.[30] Indeed, the social stratification of pre-Islamic tribal society often appears as the enemy to Muslim egalitarianism in early Islamic historiography rather than a resource for its preservation.[31]

As is well known, long before the advent of Islam in Hijaz and the victories against Byzantium and Iran, the Arabian tribes that inhabited the inner reaches of the Arabian Peninsula had evaded inclusion into the territorial boundaries of neighboring empires. The stereotypes foisted upon these peoples by outsiders as an indomitable tribal people who defied civilization and preferred barbarism enjoyed a

long currency; it even came to be appropriated by the inhabitants of Arabia themselves. As early as the writings of Greek historian Diodorus Siculus (fl. first century BCE), one already finds this theme of the indomitable Arabians:

> [T]he Arabians who inhabit this country [that is, between Syria and Egypt], being difficult to overcome in war, remain always unenslaved; furthermore, they never at any time accept a man of another country as their over-lord and continue to maintain their liberty unimpaired.[32]

Of course, the inhabitants of the Arabian Peninsula did know many kings – even kings who spoke their own languages and cultivated familiar tribal lineages and alliances, such as the crown-wearing phylarchs in Syria and Southern Iraq and the kings of Himyar and the Yemen.[33] But many Arabian tribes boasted of their evasion of these kings' reach and deemed their tribes be *laqah*, that is to say, freemen who recognized the authority and religion (*din*) of no king.[34] In words of the pre-Islamic poet ʿAmr b. Hawt al-Riyahi:

> They are the freemen (*laqah*) and reject the kings' religion (*din al-muluk*)
> And make kings tremble when they rush to war.[35]

The significance of *din* here is somewhat difficult to parse given that *din* can carry not only the sense of 'religion' but also 'judgement'; these tribes' rejection of a kings' *din* apparently reflects not merely a rejection of a royal cultic identity, but also a king's customs and law.

Only some Arabian tribes boasted of being *laqah*,[36] but Muhammad's tribe, the Quraysh of Mecca, reputedly ranked among their number.[37] 'Mecca was a land of freemen (*laqah*)', as one early scholar notes, because 'they accepted no king's religion' and 'they recognized the authority of no king'.[38] Yet, though the *laqah* defied kings and rejected their religions, the pre-Islamic poets clearly believed that the *laqah* had *mulk*, too. The pre-Islamic poet Afwah al-Awdi boasts of his tribe:

> Our dominion is the first dominion of freemen
> and our fathers of the Awd are the best.
> *Mulkuna mulkun laqahun awwalun*
> *wa-abuna min Bani Awdin khiyarun*.[39]

Emblematic of the defiant spirit of the *laqah* tribes was their refusal to bow to kings, assimilated perhaps into Islam in the proverbial Muslim refusal to bow to any man except for God.[40] Many Arabian tribes, such as Mecca's neighbors, Thaqif and Hawazin, famously chaffed at the practice of prostrating even in prayer, and petitioned Muhammad to exempt them from the practice, albeit to no avail.[41] Muhammad's main rival to prophecy in Arabia, Musaylima of Yamama, reportedly curried favor with *laqah* of the Tamim by exempting them from the humiliation of paying alms-tax and the indignity of raising their butts into the air while prostrating in prayer.[42]

Vestiges of the defiant *laqah*'s attitude towards kings also entered the highly idealized, literary accounts of the early conquests. Before the battle of Yarmuk in 636,

the Qurashi general Khalid b. al-Walid purportedly entered into a colorful exchange with the Byzantine high commander, named Bahan, in which the topic of kings arose:

> Bahan said, 'Praise God who made our prophet [that is, Jesus] the most excellent of prophets, our king [Heraclius] the most excellent of kings, and our community is the best community …'
>
> But Khalid interrupted his speech, saying, 'Praise God who made us faithful to our prophet and your prophet, who made us affirm the truth of our scripture and your scripture and who made the *amir* over us to be one of us. Were he to claim to be our king, then we would remove him! We do not regard our *amir* as more excellent than us save in his piety or his fear of God.'[43]

Pious braves who defy kings and leave their enemies abashed by their otherworldly courage populate the narratives of the early Islamic conquests and make for compelling protagonists. Yet, one should also not lose sight of the ideology that undergirds these narratives: despite these braves' defiance of kings, they are nonetheless emblems of early Islamic triumphalism more than they are emblems of a new, egalitarian vision of society. These Arabian braves humbled kings and would not be cowed by them, yet they are not icons of the end of all dominion; rather, they are the harbingers of the emergent dominion of a new hegemon.[44]

Hence, neither the Qurʾan nor the pre-Islamic tribal tradition imparted the unambiguously negative sense of *mulk* found in anti-Umayyad polemic. The trope was also not, as often assumed, an Abbasid-era invention intended to tarnish the Umayyads. 'The hostility to the Umayyads is too pervasive in the sources to reflect the change of dynasty', Crone notes.[45] Beyond the violence of the dynastic transition, the Abbasids' hostility to the historical memory of Umayyad caliphs was, furthermore, not as absolute as modern historians had once imagined.[46] As will be seen below, the trope was primarily a development of the *hadith* folk of Iraq. Although the trope gained wide currency beyond their circles, it is in the traditions of the *hadith* folk that *mulk* first sheds its meaning of 'dominion' or 'sovereignty' to mean something unambiguously akin to 'tyranny'.

Perhaps the most famous version of this trope comes in a prophetic report related by a freedman of the Prophet named Safina: 'The caliphate shall last thirty years', the Prophet portends, 'then after that there shall be tyranny (*mulk*)'.[47] The calculation of a 30-year span featured in Safina's report is, in many ways, an early attempt at historical periodization. The 30-year span encompasses the so-called 'rightly-guided caliphs' beginning with Abu Bakr's reign in AH 11/632 CE and ending with ʿAli's assassination in AH 40/661 CE. As such, the tradition certainly counts as one of the earliest statements of the 'four-caliph thesis' that would eventually become a staple of Sunni historiography. It was also a direct attack on the legitimacy of the Umayyad caliphs as it compared their caliphal rule unfavorably to an idealized past. In other versions of the tradition, this attack against the Umayyad legitimacy is explicit. The main transmitter of the *hadith*, the Basran traditionist Saʿid b. Jumhan, responds to Safina, 'The Umayyads claim that the caliphate resides with them.' 'Those sons of pale-eyed women (*banu l-zurqaʾ*)[48] lie', Safina responds, 'rather they are worst of kings and Muʿawiya is the first king!'[49]

The expectation of a period of prophecy followed by a period of caliphal rule and then a period of tyranny appears in many versions, some attributed to the Prophet and many more attributed to his Companions. As above, most versions place the watershed moment at the accession of Muʿawiya to the caliphate in the wake of the assassination of his sole rival, ʿAli b. Abi Talib, in AH 40/661 CE – a year simultaneously praised as the 'year of unity (*al-jamaʿa*)' and bemoaned as the end of caliphal ideal.[50] Yet, not all versions posit that the tyranny of *mulk* begins at ʿAli's assassination. Others assert, rather, that the age of the utopian caliphs ended with the caliphate of ʿUthman b. ʿAffan (r. 644–56), placing the appearance of *mulk* after his assassination and simultaneous with the outbreak of first civil war (*al-fitna al-kubra*).[51] For instance, when the news of the caliph's assassination reached the governor of Yemen in Sanʿaʾ, Thumama b. ʿAdi, he reportedly opined, 'This is the time when the caliphate of prophecy (*khilafat al-nubuwwa*) is snatched away; rule has now become tyranny and despotism (*wa-sara l-amru mulkan jabriyyatan*).'[52] Such traditions implicate communal strife with ending the ideal caliphal period and, consequently, implicate ʿAli along with Muʿawiya in its dissolution. Along this vein, ʿAmr b. al-ʿAs (d. *c.* 662–4) – the famed Qurashi conqueror of Egypt and ally of Muʿawiya – reproached al-Hasan b. ʿAli for his initial refusal to recognize Muʿawiya as caliph after the death of his father ʿAli:

> You sons of ʿAbd al-Muttalib, God will not grant you dominion (*mulk*) just because you kill caliphs and declare licit the shedding of blood that God has declared sacred, or just because you covet after dominion and carry out impermissible acts![53]

Other traditions posit an even earlier time for the devolution of the caliph. The Medinan scholar, Saʿid b. al-Musayyib (d. *c.* 709–10), purportedly once declared: 'The caliphs are three and the rest are kings: Abu Bakr, ʿUmar, and ʿUmar.' Saʿid's audience presses him to name the second ʿUmar, whom they did not know, but later readers clearly understood that he portended the future caliphate of the Umayyad ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAziz (r. 717–20) and ranked ʿUmar II's caliphate as highly as those of Abu Bakr and ʿUmar.[54]

Not all traditions draw the lines so starkly. The Qurashi Companion and early governor of Syria, Abu ʿUbayda b. al-Jarrah (d. 639), quotes the Prophet as saying:

> Your religion shall begin with prophecy and mercy, then dominion and mercy, then sullied dominion, then dominion and despotism under which even wine and silk will be deemed licit (*awwalu dinikum nubuwwa wa-rahma, thumma mulk wa-rahma, thumma mulk aʿfar thumma mulk wa-jabrut yastahillu fiha al-khamr wa-l-harir*).[55]

Such 'gradualist' versions of the tradition dispense with the negative meaning of *mulk* altogether. The community begins with an ideal, but then God subsequently grants *mulk* – here, 'sovereignty' or 'dominion' and not 'tyranny' – to less ideal rulers. 'A caliphate of prophecy, then God gives dominion to whom He wills', one such *hadith* declares.[56]

Wherever such traditions draw the line, civil strife (*fitna*) over control of the community, not a single man's autocracy, is what most often ends the utopian phase and ushers in a new era. *Fitna* is among the earliest and most important themes of early Islamic historiography and imbedded in the architectural logic of its periodization.[57] The impact of this theme on non-Arabic historiography appears even as early as the Syriac historiography from Umayyad Syria.[58] Although accusations abound against Muʿawiya and the Umayyads as the guilty party, such complaints are also expressed during the second civil war (683–92), during which the Umayyads in Syria and the Zubayrids in the Hijaz battled for the control of the caliphate. The Hashimite Ibn ʿAbbas warns fellow Muslims to flee both the Umayyads and the Zubayrids lest they be led to Hell, stating, 'This affair started with prophecy and mercy and then a caliphate, but today it is futile tyranny (*mulk ʿaqim*).'[59] The attribution of this utterance to Ibn ʿAbbas is likely spurious, but one finds similar themes in a verse of the poet Ibn Qays al-Ruqayyat (d. 699) as he praises the victorious arrival in Basra of Musʿab b. al-Zubayr:

> His dominion is a dominion of mercy, in it
> Is neither despotism nor high-handedness.
>
> *Mulkuhu mulku rahmatin laysa fihi*
> *jabarutun minhu wa-la kibriyaʾu*.[60]

The second civil war is also the purported context in which Saʿid b. Jumhan was inspired to circulate Safina's report. Saʿid b. Jumhan had not met the Prophet's freedman until the days of al-Ḥajjaj b. Yusuf al-Thaqafi, that is, after the Umayyads' victory over the Zubayrids in 692.[61] The Abbasid-era historian al-Madaʾini relates the story of a Yemeni man who, when faced with the oppression of the caliph's governor in his homeland, traveled to the court of Umayyad caliph ʿAbd al-Malik in distant Syria. While ʿAbd al-Malik delivered his Friday sermon, the Yemeni man interrupted him to ask for redress against the misdeeds of the caliph's governor. The caliph threatened to kill him if he dare utter another word, and the man replied, 'I have heard that first there shall be prophecy, then the caliphate and mercy, and then tyranny and despotism. Prophecy and the caliphate have certainly departed, for this is despotism!'[62]

The rudimentary periodization of early Islamic history into three stages – the eras of prophecy, of caliphal justice, and of kingship/tyranny – had an inherent appeal to early Islamic historiography. Positing the earliest caliphs as embodying a higher ideal did come at the expense of downgrading current rulers, but this was not always a full-frontal attack on the legitimacy of those in authority. The periodization also served a hortatory function, marking off who was worthy of their rulers' emulation and who was not. Such traditions also gave voice to a nostalgia for past glories of simpler times. Indeed, throughout early Islamic historiography, nostalgia often afflicts the participants in the early Islamic conquest before any indication of future tragedy has reared its head. In his first public address to the Muslim armies after the founding of Basra, the victorious Qurashi general ʿUtba b. Ghazwan (d. 638) warns his warriors thus: 'Prophecy has never appeared without being replaced by tyranny, and I seek refuge in God from the fate of seeing that time.'[63]

Still, the message is clear: what's done is done, the utopian past will not return, and one can only emulate that past in the present. This hortatory function of the tradition emerges in particular in the literary adaptation and expansions of the tradition. Thus, the caliph Abu Bakr al-Siddiq allegedly declared:

> Of all people in this world and the next, kings are the most pitiable (*ashqa*) … If a king comes to power, God makes him lose interest in what he owns and makes him covet all that others have … Today you are in the time of the caliphate of prophecy and at a crossroads, but after me you shall see biting kingship and tyranny gone awry (*mulkan ʿadudan wa-mulkan ʿanudan*).[64]

This statement, and those like it, easily lent themselves to the view that *mulk* meant oppression and a *malik* was a tyrant, yet even the authority that the belletrist al-Jahiz cites for the sermon, Ibrahim al-Ansari, comments: 'Caliphs, imams, and commanders of the faithful are all kings (*muluk*), but not every king can be a caliph or an imam (*wa-laysa kullu malik yakunu khalifatan wa-imaman*), and for that reason Abu Bakr distinguished between the two in his sermon.'[65] From these comments, one gets a distinct sense the early caliphs are depicted in such lofty terms in order to be aspirational and, moreover, to dissuade rulers from overstepping their bounds.

One also sees this in a famous exchange between the Medinan scholar Abu Hazim 'the Lame' (*al-aʿraj*, d. *ca.* 758) and the Umayyad caliph Sulayman b. ʿAbd al-Malik (r. 715–17). In the frame story of the exchange, the caliph arranges a meeting with Abu Hazim while he tarries in Medina before continuing onwards to Mecca when it is rumored that Abu Hazim had met Companions of the Prophet.[66] When Sulayman asks for the man's opinion of the Umayyad caliphs, Abu Hazim answers with unbridled honesty:

> Commander of the Faithful, your father used the sword to subdue the people, and they seized this dominion with violence and without the consultation of the Muslims and their consent (*akhadhu hadha l-mulk ʿanwatan ʿala ghayr mashwaratin min al-muslimin wa-la ridan lahum*). They even slaughtered a number of them.[67]

Again, although *mulk* still receives strong condemnation in these stories, the focus falls squarely the manner in which *mulk* has been claimed: *mulk* becomes unjust when seized unjustly.

Of all people, even ʿUmar b. al-Khattab reportedly felt confused on the issue, or at the very least his piety drove him to seek clarification thereon. Once ʿUmar asked Salman al-Farisi whether or not he was a caliph or a king, and Salman warned him, 'If you levy more or less a single *dirham* from the lands of the Muslims and then apportion it to any unworthy purpose, then you are a king and not a caliph.'[68]

Earlier scholarly treatments of *mulk* in Islamic political discourse – less reliant on the *hadith* folk and other opponents of Umayyad legitimacy – regarded *mulk* in more neutral terms as meaning simply 'sovereignty' or 'dominion'.[69] Still, it remains true that many of the early, piety-minded Muslims bemoaned the decline of caliphal rule into a type of tyrannical *mulk* and that they laid the blame for the development at the feet of Muʿawiya and subsequent Umayyads given their embrace of the courtly pomp

of regional species of despotic monarchism (often labelled with terms referring to the Roman and Persian monarchs, such as *qaysariyya, hiraqliyya*, *kisrawiyya*).[70] While salient as an anti-Umayyad critique, it must also be contextualized as merely one current of early Muslim pietistic discourse on governance among many. *Mulk* was a capacious term that the piety-minded opposition winnowed down to a narrower sense, meaning not 'sovereignty' or 'dominion' in general but specifically 'tyranny'.

MULK IN THE POSITIVE

According to an early narrative of Mecca's conquest in 630, the Umayyad leader of the Meccan Quraysh, Abu Sufyan, beheld the spectacle of Muhammad marching into the city while seated next to the Prophet's uncle al-ʿAbbas. A recent convert to Muhammad's faith, Abu Sufyan observed his former nemesis at last enter the city and exclaimed, 'The dominion (*mulk*) of your nephew has become great!' Al-ʿAbbas rebuked him, 'It is not dominion; rather, it is prophecy (*nubuwwa*)!'[71] At the moment of the Prophet's triumph, Muhammad was foremost a conquering prophet, not a conquering king. Yet, as seen above, in the broader frame of early Islamic discourse, prophecy and *mulk* were not prima facie as incompatible as the story would have us believe – indeed, they often go hand in hand.

Another tradition portrayed Muhammad's rejection of the kingly office as a conscious decision, yet simultaneously posited kingship (*mulk*) as entirely in accord with prophethood (*nubuwwa*): once while Muhammad sat in the company of Gabriel, a second angel descended to pay him a visit and posed him a question, 'Shall your Lord make you a prophet king or a messenger servant (*a-fa-malikan nabiyyan yajʿaluka aw ʿabdan rasulan*)?' Counseled in humility by Gabriel, Muhammad chose to be a messenger servant.[72] The tradition did not denounce kingship per se, rather it demonstrated that Muhammad's motivation lay not in love of power and wealth. Other traditions struck a similar chord but highlighted the prophet's rejection of the pursuit of wealth. 'Revelation was not given to me so that I might gather wealth (*ajmaʿa al-mal*) or be a merchant (*akuna min al-tajirin*)', the Prophet is said to have averred.[73]

Mulk in the narrow sense of being a king, a *malik*, does not apply to early portraits of Muhammad's prophecy, but a rejection of a royal office was not tantamount to a rejection of *mulk* as 'dominion' in a broader sense. This distinction between *mulk* as kingship and *mulk* as dominion is subtle and, therefore, often missed, but it is key for understanding how the early Islamic polity drew upon the precedence of Muhammad's prophethood as a source of its mandate to rule and how its early rulers viewed his prophecy as concomitant with the polity's earthly triumph. The distinction between the two types of *mulk* – 'kingship' and 'dominion' – appears quite vividly in a famous incident from the early Meccan period from Muhammad's life narrated by Ibn Ishaq (d. 150/767). ʿUtba b. Rabiʿa, an ʿAbshami chieftain of the Quraysh and Muʿawiya's maternal grandfather, approached Muhammad to conciliate him as the opposition began to intensify against the Prophet and his early followers. Never one keen to deride his kinsman, ʿUtba presents Muhammad with a proposal: wealth (*mal*) shall be Muhammad's if he has need of it, status (*sharaf*) if he yearns for it, kingship (*mulk*) if he desires it, and even a doctor to treat him if it is madness that afflicts him. In response, Muhammad recites the opening verses from Surat al-Fussilat until he

reaches the fifth verse, 'They say: our hearts are shielded from the faith to which you call us …' Stricken dumb with awe at the scripture's eloquence, ʿUtba returns to the elders of the pagan Quraysh and declares what he heard to be neither poetry, magic, nor divination and advises them to leave Muhammad be. 'His words will doubtlessly spread far and wide (*la-yakunnana li-qawlihi … nabaʾun ʿazimun*)', ʿUtba portends,

> … if he gains the upper hand over the Arabs, then his dominion will be your dominion, his exaltation your exaltation, and through him you will be the most fortunate of people (*in yazhar ʿala l-ʿarab fa-mulkuhu mulkukum wa-ʿizzuhu ʿizzakum wa-kuntum asʿad al-nas bih*).

ʿUtba's last comment echoes the wording of Q. 3: 26 and homes in on an important, if often neglected, theme found in the *sira-maghazi* literature: although as a prophet Muhammad roundly rejects the trappings of kingship (*mulk*) for himself, his prophethood brings with it a future dominion (*mulk*) for his people and community.

Early biographical accounts of Muhammad's life reject royal imagery when depicting Muhammad's prophetic office; however, they do speak frequently and freely of the *mulk* of the prophet and his community (*umma*) in overwhelmingly positive terms. In the *sira-maghazi* literature, the prophet's birth portends the future glory and triumph of his community from the very moment of his conception. Hence, the prophet's father bears a holy light between his eyes that passes on to the prophet's mother, Amina, when she conceives him; and at his birth Amina witnesses the palaces of Syria (*qusur al-sham*) fill with that same light, an omen of future conquests.[74] Likewise, as the prophet travels about as a boy, he is recognized as a future king (*malik*), or as carrying dominion (*mulk*), by Christian monks, Jewish rabbis, and pagan diviners alike.[75] These narratives frame *mulk* not in terms of a political office but rather within a panoramic view of human history as laid out by the divine providence. Viewed through this lens, *mulk* and its vicissitudes appear as a preordained destiny brought by Muhammad to his people, a destiny anticipated and foreshadowed in the narratives that recount the Islamic *praeparatio coranica* and disclose the architectonics of divine providence on the grandest scale.

Ibn Ishaq again provides us with one of the clearest visions of the prophet's *mulk* as signaling a manifest destiny conferred upon his future community in a story of the pre-Islamic, Lakhmid king of Yemen, Rabiʿa b. Nasr. Ostensibly, Ibn Ishaq's tale is about how the king Rabiʿa b. Nasr came to abandon his kingdom in Yemen and to make a pact with the Sasanian Shah of Persia in order establish the rule of his dynasty, the so-called Nasrids, in al-Hira in southern Iraq.[76] However, Ibn Ishaq also interweaves this story with vivid portents of Muhammad's prophetic destiny. The story begins with the Yemeni king Rabiʿa awakening to find himself terrified by a dream whose meaning eludes him. He summons masters of divination, magic, astrology, and auguries to his court, but they are at a loss to interpret his dream. Enter the famed diviners Satih and Shiqq, each a renowned diviner (*kahin*) far more capable in the interpretation of dreams than the king's courtiers. By the end of Ibn Ishaq's account, the two diviners successfully interpret the dream of Rabiʿa b. Nasr and provide a dire prophecy of the fate of his dynasty in Yemen. They even foretell future events beyond the end of the king's rule in Yemen and prophesy the coming of Axumite rule from across the Red Sea, then the Himyarites' expulsion of Axumite

rule under the leadership of Dhu Yazan, and (finally) the coming of the prophet Muhammad.

Each diviner delivers his message to Rabiʿa b. Nasr individually without the aid of one another. The wording of each diviner's prophecy as it appears in Ibn Ishaq's account is significant in both form and content. Their utterances are couched in the rhymed, cadenced prose of the Arabian diviners,[77] but they are also clearly infused with the kerygmatic expectations of the coming of Islam and its prophet. When asked who will end the dominion (*mulk*) of the Dhu Yazan in Yemen, Satih declares:

> A prophet pure * to him will come revelation * from on high.
>
> *Nabiyyun zakiyy * yaʾtihi l-wahiyy * min qibali l-ʿaliyy*.[78]

Rabiʿa asks Satih who this man shall be, and the diviner answers, 'a man from the progeny of Ghalib b. Fihr [that is, from Quraysh] … dominion shall reside with his tribe until the end of time'.[79] The theme of the dominion (*mulk*) of the prophet's tribe (*qawm*) appears yet again in the second diviner's utterances. After Satih has been dismissed, Rabiʿa b. Nasr summons Shiqq, the second diviner. Shiqq's prophecy confirms that of Satih, and when asked when the kingdom of the Dhu Yazan shall end, he declares

> It will end by a prophet sent * with truth and justice he comes * from a people of religion and virtue * among his tribe dominion shall remain until the Day of Judgment.
>
> *Yanqatiʿu bi-rasulin mursali * yaʾtu bi-l-haqqi wa-l-ʿadli * bayna ahli l-dini wa-l-fadli * yakunu l-mulku fi qawmihi ila yawmi l-fasli.*

Both prophecies that the diviners utter foretell the transferal of dominion, or *mulk*, from one dynasty and people to another as the wheel of fate turns, yet they also prophesy that the *mulk* of the coming prophet shall be of an entirely different sort. His *mulk* shall remain among his tribe (*qawm*) until the Day of Judgment. The story writes the tribe (*qawm*) of Muhammad, Mecca's Quraysh, into eschatological dramas, that in late antique thought had come to be seen as a contest of empires.[80]

That dominion fell to the prophet's kindred in these accounts was no accident. Rather, it was an extrapolation of Qurʾanic themes mobilized in order to articulate a discourse for the legitimacy of caliphal rule by the Quraysh. In the Qurʾan, God gave 'a mighty dominion (*mulk ʿazim*)' to Abraham's descendants (Q. 4:54). God chose the Messenger's community of believers to follow the religion (*milla*) of their father Abraham (Q. 22:78). They were a community (*umma*) raised from Abraham's true progeny (*dhuriyya*) and charged with the custodianship of Mecca as a place of prayer and a sign of God's covenant. God raised up the Messenger from their midst in answer to the prayers of Abraham and Ishmael (Q. 2: 25–30). The Abrahamic *mulk* promised them is, in part, otherworldly and eschatological (Q. 20:20), but it also manifests in this-worldly realities. In the past, the Israelites conquered and inherited the lands of their enemies, as the Qurʾanic Moses promised his people, 'Perhaps your Lord shall destroy your enemies and cause you to inherit the land (*yastakhlifakum fi l-ard*), so take care how you act' (Q. 7:128–9). But, cursed by God because of their disobedience, the Israelites and Jews no longer had a share (*nasib*) in the dominion God

granted them (Q. 4: 52–3). God had warned them before in the Psalms of David, 'We decreed in the Book Psalms (*zabur*) – after admonition (*min baʿdi l-dhikri*) – that my righteous servants shall inherit the earth' (Q. 21:105, citing Ps. 37:29).[81] That is, the promise was contingent on their righteousness – without righteousness the promise was void, for God's covenant (*ʿahd*) excluded the unrighteous (Q. 2:124). Yet, the promise did await the righteous believers who followed the Messenger, those progeny most deserving to lay claim to Abraham's legacy (Q. 3:68). For the Messenger's community of righteous believers, Abraham's dominion was theirs to inherit (Q. 24:55):

> God has promised those of you who believe and act righteously that He shall bequeath to them the earth just as He bequeathed it to those before them. He shall make their religion firmly established (*la-yastakhlifannahum fi l-ard kama ʻstakhlafa lladhina min qablihim wa-la-yumakkinana lahum dinahum*).

Victories over Jewish opponents mentioned in Qurʾan provided a foretaste of this promise, 'and He caused you to inherit their land, their homes, and their wealth and a land had never stepped foot on before' (Q. 33:27). Yet, the promise of Q. 24:55 was far grander that these earlier gains. Abu Jaʿfar al-Tabari (d. 923) reads the ramifications of this verse from Surat al-Nur in an unambiguously triumphalist vein:

> God shall cause [the believers] to inherit the lands of pagan Arabs and non-Arabs and make them the kings and managers of those lands (*la-yurithannahum Allahu ard al-mushrikin min al-ʿarab wa-l-ʿajam fa-yajʿaluhum mulukaha wa-sasataha*) … just as He had done with the Israelites before them when they destroyed the tyrants in Syria and made them the kings and inhabitants of those lands (*mulukaha wa-sukkanaha*).[82]

Citations of this Qurʾanic theme of the righteous followers of Muhammad inheriting the dominion of Abraham and, therefore, the lands and wealth of sinful nations appear sporadically in the *sira-maghazi* literature, but it is nearly ubiquitous in the narratives of the early conquests.[83] The triumphalist adaptation of this Qurʾanic theme even made its impact on in early Syriac disputational literature in the eighth century:[84] 'This is the sign that God loves us and is pleased with our religion (*tawditan*)', quips a Muslim emir in an eighth-century Syriac text, 'that He has given us authority (*šultana*) over all faiths (*dehlan*) and peoples. And behold, they are our slaves and subjects!'[85] In other words, the hegemony of the Prophet's community was a sign of their favor in God's eyes and explained why the spread of their dominion was unstoppable. The early conquest elite of the Islamic polity were a community of Abraham's progeny made righteous by following the God's chosen prophet from their midst, a prophet who brought with him the mandate to spread God's religion and their dominion. The Umayyad-era poet Jarir b. ʿAtiyya draws from the Qurʾanic idiom of this claim explicitly in the following verses:

> Our father is God's friend[86] and God is our Lord
> We are pleased with what the King[87] gave and ordained
> He built God's *qibla* by which men are guided
> and He bequeathed to us glory and timeless dominion (*mulkᵃⁿ muʿammara*).[88]

With the conquests following Muhammad's death, the Quraysh soon found themselves as overseers of a vast dominion and atop the commanding heights of a complex machinery of conquest and expansion. How, at the earliest stages, the Quraysh justified their hegemony over this early conquest polity in a coherent discourse of legitimacy is difficult to know precisely, but the importance of the dominion of the Quraysh to the Umayyads, the first of the clans of Quraysh to establish a caliphal dynasty, is clearer and clearer still in the Islamic historiography of the 800s.

A late-eighth-century historian named Sayf b. ʿUmar al-Tamimi imagined how this discourse developed in an intriguing episode that he places during the caliphate of ʿUthman b. ʿAffan. Staunchly pro-ʿUthman and relentlessly anti-Shiʿite, as a historian Sayf nonetheless had a knack for explaining the dynamics of the earliest conquest state.[89] In the famous episode, malcontents from Arab tribesmen who settled in Kufa during the conquest have begun expressing their anger at the third caliph ʿUthman b. ʿAffan and his favoritism for the Quraysh and his Umayyad kinsmen. To put out the flames of what promised to quickly ignite into an inferno of sedition, the Iraqi dissidents are exiled to Syria where they are to be detained. The mouthpiece whom Sayf chooses to counter the discontents of the Kufans is ʿUthman's governor in Syria and the future Umayyad caliph, Muʿawiya b. Abi Sufyan. Muʿawiya's warning to the Kufan dissidents reads as an elegant manifesto in favor of the hegemony of Quraysh. He rebukes their defiance of Qurashi hegemony as follows:

> You are a group of Arabs who possess eloquence and the wisdom of age. Through Islam you have attained a lofty station. You have conquered nations (*umam*) and come to possess their patrimonies (*mawarithahum*), but still it has reached me that you wish to take vengeance against Quraysh! …
>
> Do you know of any Arab or non-Arab people or any dark or light-skinned nation whom fate has not stricken down in their safest refuge (*hurma*) or in their land by some turn of fortune (*bi-dawlatin*)? All but Quraysh! Any who have plotted against them God has shoved their faces into the dirt! When God willed to deliver those who would honor and follow His religion (*din*) from misery in this world and damnation in the next, He singled out His best creation [that is to say, Muhammad]. He then chose companions for him – the best of whom were Quraysh. God then erected this dominion with Quraysh as its foundation (*bana hadha l-mulka ʿalayhim*) and established the caliphate for Quraysh, for it suites none but them (*jaʿala l-khilafa fihim fa-la yasluhu illa lahum*). God already protected them in the barbaric age (*al-jahiliyya*) although they practiced among themselves a religion that was not His. Do you imagine that He will not protect Quraysh from your ilk now that they practice His religion?[90]

Ridwan al-Sayyid has singled out at three key themes embedded within this passage that might shed light on how early Quraysh and, by extension, the Umayyads, articulated a triumphalist discourse of political legitimacy. These themes are: 1) that, of all peoples, God chose the Quraysh of Mecca to be the Prophet's kin and his strongest allies; 2) through the Prophet and his kinsmen, God chose the Arabs to inherit the wealth and glory of nations past; and 3) God had given Quraysh dominion (*mulk*) in order to oversee the realization of this inheritance and to preserve it.[91]

In this view, Quraysh were at the epicenter of an ever-expanding circle of dominion inaugurated by the prophethood of Muhammad, their kinsman. The Umayyads saw themselves as the leaders of Quraysh and, therefore, the vanguards of the dominion that the Prophet bequeathed to his community. What is key to keep in mind, however, is that their hegemony was not seen as some sort of pan-Arab mandate to rule. Rather, Quraysh's mandate to expand their dominion derived from their kinship to the Prophet, their descent from Abraham, and their custodianship of his shrine, the Kaʿba, in Mecca along with its cultic rites. ʿUthman thus relied on Muʿawiya's diatribe to mollify any attempts to expand this mandate of Quraysh to any other Arabian tribes.

That this inherited, prophetic dominion is more Abrahamic than Arab, however one conceives of 'Arabness', can be seen in the following narrative transmitted by al-Baladhuri (d. *c.* 892). When a prominent Arab notable from the tribe of Tamim (a 'northern' Arab), ʿAyyash b. al-Zibriqan, comes to visit the caliph ʿAbd al-Malik, the caliph takes advantage of the presence of his advisor, Rawh b. Zinbaʿ al-Judhami, to engage ʿAyyash in conversation and to have some fun at Rawh's expense:

> ʿAbd al-Malik said, ''Ayyash, what is your view of this Yamani man' – meaning Rawh – 'bragging on and on about the kings of Yemen?'
>
> 'Commander of the Faithful,' ʿAyyash replied, 'you and I are the descendants of Ishmael, Abraham's son, and even the dominion (*mulk*) of our brethren the Jews, the descendants of Abraham's son Isaac, is greater than the dominion of kings of Yemen. The dominion of David and Solomon even came with prophecy. We, the descendants of Ishmael, also have prophecy and dominion in our lineage (*fa-fina l-nubuwwa wa-l-mulk*). Thus is our dominion and the dominion of our brethren the Jews greater than the dominion of the kings of Yemen (*fa-mulkuna wa-mulk ikhwatina aʿzamu min mulkihim*).'[92]

Rawh was a notable of the tribe of Judham, a 'southern' Arab tribe claiming Yemeni descendent, and the exclusion of his tribe from the Abrahamic lineage reflects the old view, predating the Abbasid period, that the Yemeni tribes could not boast Ishmaelite descent.[93] Although the genealogical circle of Ishmaelite descent eventually expanded to include the Yemeni tribes, its original remit was narrower and claimed only by 'northern' tribes, such as Tamim and Quraysh.[94] Quraysh, however, always remain at the top of this putative hierarchy of Abrahamic lineage insofar as they remained custodians of the Kaʿba, the supreme Abrahamic shrine. Even if power-sharing was a requisite of rule for Quraysh, the prophetic *mulk* bequeathed to them was theirs alone. An idea also expressed in a prophetic *hadith*, 'Dominion (*al-mulk*) belongs to Quraysh, the judiciary (*al-qadaʾ*) to the Ansar, the call to prayer to Ethiopians (*al-Habasha*), speed (*al-surʿa*) to Yemen … and trusteeship (*al-amana*) to al-Azd.'[95]

The Umayyads held tenaciously to the *mulk* of the Quraysh as political hegemons and regarded themselves as its most powerful and rightful custodians. Even other sub-clans of the Quraysh ostensibly lacked their claim. In a letter written to ʿAbd Allah b. ʿUmar b. al-Khattab, Muʿawiya explains his rationale for keeping the leadership of the *umma* within the grasp of the Umayyads:

> Rule (*hadha l-amr*) fell to the sons of ʿAbd Manaf because they are the household of the Messenger of God. When God's Messenger died, the people conferred rule to Abu Bakr and ʿUmar, though they were not from the fount of dominion and caliphate (*min ghayr maʿdan al-mulk wa-l-khilafa*) ... Then dominion returned to the sons of ʿAbd Manaf, and there it shall remain until the Day of Resurrection.[96]

The statement echoes earlier narratives of the succession to Muhammad that viewed the caliphate of Abu Bakr and ʿUmar as ill-conceived and that recount how the Umayyads sought to aid ʿAli and ʿUthman to restore leadership of the early community to the clan of ʿAbd Manaf. ʿAli rejected the idea of deposing Abu Bakr outright, but the sentiment that Abu Bakr and ʿUmar, being from the weaker Qurashi clans of Taym and ʿAdi respectively, seized the leadership without the assent of ʿAbd Manaf when the Prophet was closer in kinship to them remained salient.[97] The ancestor of the Umayyads-Abshamis and Hashimites, ʿAbd Manaf b. Qusayy, had been purportedly entrusted with the supervision of the Kaʿba (*al-riyasa*) and the provision of water to pilgrims (*al-siqaya*) in pre-Islamic times, and he thus passed his authority passed on to his twin sons Hashim and ʿAbd Shams.[98] The Umayyads thus saw a continuity between their power over Mecca prior to the advent of Islam and their subsequent ascent to the caliphate and regarded it as a sign of divine favor. 'Lordship was theirs before Islam, and with Islam dominion was theirs as well (*lahum al-suʾdad fi l-jahiliyya wa-l-mulk fi l-islam*)', as the pro-Umayyad poet Abu Sakhr al-Hudhali proclaimed.[99]

While such literary accounts are, admittedly, fashioned from the pious fictions of historical memory, the themes they convey and the ideologies they display are nevertheless mainstays of late-Umayyad ideology, as attested in both the poetry of Umayyad court and the official epistolography composed by such masterful pioneers of Arabic prose as ʿAbd al-Hamid al-Katib. The latter speaks explicitly of the Umayyads as the custodians of the inheritance of Muhammad's prophethood (*mawarith nubuwwatih*).[100] In late Umayyad ideology, the caliphs were regarded as having collectively inherited the dominion of all prophets in history, an inheritance that granted them a mandate to rule.[101] As brilliantly summarized by Wadad Kadi, the ideology was in its most basic form as follows:

> God gave men prophets; the last prophet died; God took things into his hands again; He created a new institution to take care of the affairs of the community of His last prophet and continue to protect His religion; this was the caliphate. Simplified though this schema may seem, it is precisely what the letters [of ʿAbd al-Hamid al-Katib] claim for the caliphate. The best proof for this is that the caliphate is actually called there the '*wilayat ʿahd Allah*', the tenure of the mandate (to rule) by God.[102]

The greatest challenge to this late Umayyad ideology came from the other descendants of ʿAbd Manaf, from Muhammad's clan of Hashim. The ideology of Hashimite legitimacy flourished under the Umayyads[103] and, when wielded as anti-legitimist discourse against the Umayyads, ultimately led to the undoing of their caliphal hegemony. The Umayyads' fate was thus foretold by the Hashimite Ibn ʿAbbas in a literary account of an exchange with Muʿawiya:

> With us [the Hāshimids] the affair opened, and with us it will be sealed. You [Umayyads] have a hastened dominion (*mulk muʿajjal*) but ours is a deferred (*mulk muʾajjal*). Though your dominion precedes ours, after our dominion shall be no other.[104]

In other exchanges, Ibn ʿAbbas predicts to Muʿawiya the future Hashimite dominion and a Mahdi-Qaʾim (*mulk hashimi wa-mahdi qaʾim*), an apocalyptic redeemer destined to fill the earth with justice.[105] Such pro-Hashimite discourse was a potent response to Umayyad triumphalism, and a key reason why the Hashimite movement could replace the Umayyads with Abbasid caliphs in 132/750.

CONCLUSION: THE VARIETIES OF *MULK*

This re-examination of *mulk* in early Islamic political discourse has sought to redress and to correct the rather flat and colorless treatments of the term that have come to predominate in the secondary literature. *Mulk*, I contend, cannot merely be seen as the antithesis of an earlier caliphal ideal of *al-khilafa ʿala minhaj al-nubuwwa*, 'caliphate on the model of prophecy'. Rather, in the discourse of the Qurʾan and early Muslim piety, *mulk* was a capacious term that embraced ideas such as 'sovereignty' and 'dominion' in both its human and divine instantiations. The idea of a god-given prophetic *mulk*, moreover, was key to a religious discourse that articulated a mandate for conquest and legitimized Islamic polity's hegemonic claims to replace and surpass imperial and regional rivals. *Mulk* also played in the formation of the political ideology of the Umayyads, both with regard to Umayyad triumphalism and their claim to legitimate rule as the inheritors and vanguards of the prophetic dominion granted to Mecca's Quraysh. While anti-Umayyad critics did indeed blame the dynasty for a devolution of rulership from the caliphal ideal into an unjust autocracy, this polemic emerged among the *hadith*-folk who narrowed the capacious meaning of *mulk* for a particular purpose – namely, to underscore the falsehood of Umayyad legitimism and assert the authority of not merely an idealized caliphal past, but likely also the *hadith*-folk's own claim to be the true inheritors and interpreters of the Prophet's legacy.

NOTES

1 Shahin 2009: 410–8.
2 Chrysos 1978; Shahid 1981.
3 Haldon 1990: 73.
4 See Marsham 2018: 25–8 and Papoutsakis 2017: 193–4 *et passim* for cautious, comparative assessments of late antique and early Islamic conceptions of rulership. The title 'shadow of God on earth' is perhaps the Islamic title closest to the Byzantine designation of emperor as *eikōn theo*, 'the image of God'. Although often regarded as quintessentially Abbasid title (for example, Darling 2014: 424 and al-Azmeh 1997: 181ff.), ʿAbd al-Malik already referred to himself as 'the shadow of God on earth' according to al-Baladhuri 2001: 362. Moreover, the maxim, 'The ruler is the shadow of God on earth (*al-sultan zill Allah fi l-ard*)', is attributed to Muhammad at quite an early date; for example, see Ibn Zanjawayh 2007: 64 (citing the authority of Kathir b. Murra of Hims, a contemporary of

ʿAbd al-Malik) and Ibn Abi ʿAsim 1980: 492. Sasanid and Persian antecedents for the title 'shadow of God', although often asserted, are non-existent.

5 Kadi and Shahin 2015: 39.
6 Ibn Saʿd 1957: IV, 113.
7 Brooks 1904: 71; see also Marsham 2013: 93ff.
8 Crone and Hinds 1986: 120.
9 Bosworth 1980: 42–6.
10 El Cheikh 2004: 113.
11 Crone 2004: 46; see also Höfert 2015: 286–7.
12 Ibn Hanbal 2008: 37, 78.
13 Ibn Shabba 1973: II, 635; compare al-Darimi 1983: I, 16, 17 and Ibn ʿAsakir 2000: I, 184.
14 Nadler 1990: 39–42, 58–63.
15 Khalifa b. Khayyat 1985: 332.
16 Fowden 2004: 171.
17 Donner 2010: xii.
18 Ibn Hanbal 2008: XV, 234, 34, 143.
19 Ibn Wadih 1883: 269; see also Borrut 2011: 217ff.
20 Ibn ʿAsakir 2000: LVI, 177; compare Ibn Wadih 1883: II, 276.
21 As noted by Marsham 2009: 1–2; see also Azmeh 1997 and Darling 2014.
22 Crone 2004: 44–5.
23 Kadi 1988: 404.
24 See also More 2012.
25 See also Janowski 2010.
26 It is worth noting, however, that the Qurʾan banishes absolutely 'the kingdom of the Father' (*basileia tou patros*; Matt 13:43, 26:29) from its scriptural discourse.
27 Although the Queen of Sheba appears in the Qurʾan, the scripture never directly calls her a 'queen' (*malika*) but rather describes her as 'a woman who rules of them and who has been granted all thing and possesses a mighty throne' (*imraʾa tamlikuhum wa-utiyat min kulli shayʾin wa-laha ʿarshun ʿazim*) (Q. 27:23).
28 Shahin 2009: 389–95.
29 Klein 2015: 31–5.
30 Shahin 2009: 401–2.
31 Marlow 2002: 14–16.
32 Macdonald 2001: 30.
33 Hoyland 2009.
34 ʿAthamina 1998.
35 Abū ʿUbayda 1905–9: 1, 69 l. 13; compare Kister 1968: 154 and al-Jahiz 1964: I, 187.
36 Kister 1968: 153–4.
37 Abu ʿUbayda 1991: 118.
38 Al-Mubarrad 1874–92: I, 185, 706.
39 Ibn al-Muʿtazz 1935: 9.
40 Tottoli 1998a: 20–5; 1998b: 419–26.
41 Kister 1979: 2–7.
42 Kister 2002: 21–2, 26.
43 Ibn Aʿtham 1991: I, 189; al-Azdī 1854: 179–80.
44 Sizgorich 2009: 207.
45 Crone 2004: 44.
46 See El-Hibri 2002.
47 Ibn Hanbal 2008: XXXVI, 248.

48 The reference to the pale color (either green or blue) of the Umayyads' eyes is an insult, as pale-colored eyes in this period were regarded as an ill-omened sign of deceit and blindness. See Richardson 2014.
49 Ibn Abi Shayba 2004: XIII, 63; Nuʿaym b. Hammad 1993: 57–8; al-Tirmidhi 1996: IV, 82.
50 Al-Jahiz 1964: II, 10–11.
51 See Ibn Hanbal 2008: XXXIV, 94–5, 142–3.
52 Al-Baladhuri 1979: 596.
53 Ibn Abi l-Hadid 1964: VI, 287.
54 Nuʿaym b. Hammad 1993: 57, 58.
55 Al-Darimi 1983: II, 155; compare Nuʿaym b. Hammad 1993: 54–5.
56 Abu Dawud 2009: VII, 35; compare Ibn Hanbal 2008: XV, 233–4 and al-Sayyid 1997: 74.
57 Donner 1998: 184ff.
58 Borrut 2014: 48–51.
59 Al-Baladhuri 2001: 117.
60 Al-Baladhuri 2001: 229.
61 Ibn Hanbal 2008: XXXVI, 256.
62 Al-Baladhuri 2001: 520–1.
63 Ibn Saʿd 1957: VII, 7.
64 Al-Jahiz 1998: II, 43–4.
65 Al-Jahiz 1998: II, 43–4.
66 Al-Darimi 1983: I, 163–6. That Abu Hazim al-Aʿraj actually ever met a Companion of the Prophet was denied by his son; see al-Mizzi 1996: XI, 275.
67 Al-Darimi 1983: I, 164.
68 Ibn Saʿd 1957: III, 306–7.
69 For example, see Tyan 1954: 379–86.
70 Compare al-Jahiz 1964: II, 10–11 and al-Sayyid 1997: 70–1.
71 Al-Waqidi 1966: II, 822.
72 Ibn Hanbal 2008: XII, 76–7; compare al-Bayhaqi 1988: I, 333–4.
73 Ibn Hanbal 1994: 563.
74 Maʿmar 2014: 6–7; compare Yunus 1978: 44–5, 50–1.
75 Maʿmar 2014: 6–7; al-Bayhaqi 1988: I, 88; Abu Nuʿaym 1986: I, 131.
76 See also Toral-Niehoff 2013.
77 On which, see Stewart 2011: 337–8.
78 Ibn Hisham 1955: I, 17; al-Tabari 1965: I, 912.
79 Ibn Hishām 1955: I, 17; al-Tabari 1965: I, 912.
80 Shoemaker 2014.
81 Compare Saleh 2014: 28.
82 Al-Tabari 2001: XVII, 346.
83 Al-Sayyid 1997: 82–3.
84 Compare Saleh 2014: 281–5.
85 Taylor 2015: 209, §9.
86 Abraham is called the 'friend' (Ar. *khalil*) of God in Q. 4:125.
87 Compare Q. 54:55.
88 Abu ʿUbayda 1905–9: II, 994.
89 Anthony 2012: 100–3; compare Madelung 2009.
90 Sayf 1995: 67–8; compare al-Tabari 1965: 1, 2909–11.
91 Al-Sayyid 1997: 63.
92 al-Baladhuri 1996: 577–8.

93 See, for example, Ibn Hisham 1955: I, 8; al-Bayhaqi 1988: I,179–80. Ibn Hisham himself rejects this view and updates the genealogy of Ibn Ishaq (Ibn Hishām 1955: I, 5, 7). Two Kufan genealogists al-Kalbi and Sharqi b. al-Qutami intregrated the Yemeni tribes into the Ishmaelite descent citing the *hadith*, 'All of Arabs are the progeny of Ishmael except for four tribes: the Salaf, the Awzaʿ, Hadramawt, and Thaqif (*al-ʿarab kulluha banu Ismaʿil illa arbaʿ qabaʾil al-salaf wa-l-awzaʿ wa-hadramawt wa-thaqif*)'; see al-Baladhurī 2008: 10–11; al-Tabari 1965: III, 2399–400.
94 Webb 2016: 211–15. See also Webb in this volume.
95 Ibn Hanbal 2008: XIV, 368.
96 Ps.-Ibn Qutayba 1990: I, 196.
97 Al-Baladhuri 2003: 17–18; compare Madelung 1997: 40–1.
98 Al-Tabari 1965: I, 1089; Ibn Wadih 1883: I, 278–9.
99 Abu l-Faraj 2002: XXIV, 111–12. Sharon (1991: 139ff.) also noted the importance of ʿAbd al-Manaf for political legitimacy in the Umayyad period.
100 Kadi 1994: 245.
101 Rubin 2003: 87–99.
102 Kadi 1994: 248–9.
103 Madelung 1989.
104 Ibn ʿAbd Rabbihi 1953: IV, 83.
105 El-Hibri 2002: 257–8.

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CHAPTER FOUR

ETHNICITY, POWER AND UMAYYAD SOCIETY
The rise and fall of the people of Maʿadd[1]

Peter Webb

Until recently, it was commonly presumed that the seventh-century Arabian conquerors and Umayyad elites were ethnically and doctrinally unified as Arab-Muslims. This Arab-Muslim paradigm was thought to have fostered a sense of social difference, separating conqueror elite from conquered populations. As a consequence, the conquerors were assumed to be a homogenous bloc who entered the Middle East *deus ex machina*: a new people whose new faith appeared as an external import that eradicated Late Antiquity and inaugurated the Islamic era. Such periodisations cleaving Late Antiquity from Islam are now undermined by research which highlights Islam's continuities with pre-Islamic beliefs and reveals that 'Muslims' were neither doctrinally homogeneous nor diametrically different from all Middle Eastern monotheists across the Fertile Crescent.[2] In the wake of the new thinking on nascent Islam, the time is apposite to appraise post-Conquest society by questioning what aspects of social groups and identity carried over from pre-Islamic society, and how the effluxion of Umayyad time and power politics altered them.[3]

A central task is to interrogate the idea of Arab community and identity. Amongst the varied theories on Arab origins, some have proposed that there was no community of 'Arabs' before Islam, thus calling into doubt the foundational assumption that Umayyad society can be analysed as an ethnically 'Arab' movement.[4] A wide-scale comparative survey of pre-Islamic inscriptions, literatures and poetry, alongside the manifold Muslim-era discourses on Arab history and origins, indicates that the familiar notion of Arab ethnic identity was indeed a product of social changes wrought by early Islam. The experience of living in the developing Caliphate appears to have been the catalyst that gradually prompted formerly disparate groups to construct a new unity – a novel 'imagined community'[5] – as 'Arabs'. The factors that prompt these conclusions are detailed elsewhere.[6] For present purposes, it is instructive to consider one element: the use of the name 'Arab' (*ʿarabi*/*al-ʿarab*) in records from Late Antiquity and early Islam.

Neither Arabians nor outsider observers call the inhabitants of Arabia 'Arabs' in the centuries before Islam, nor was 'Arab' a term used to refer to senses of self;[7]

whereas the name 'Arab' in Arabic records only begins to manifest across a substantial body of poetry during the late seventh century, and Syriac writers begin calling Muslims 'Arabs' in the early eighth, too.[8] When Muslim history was recorded in ninth- and tenth-century narratives, writers imagined that pre-Islamic Arabians and all of the Umayyads were 'Arabs', and hence they reconstructed history in a thoroughly Arab guise. But if we step away from later narratives, and pay attention to what early Muslims actually called themselves, we find an array of names, tribal designators and the term *muhajirun* ('Emigrants') used to describe the social organisation of early post-Conquest communities.[9] The onomastic variety suggests that the conquerors were a heterogeneous group of peoples and tribes who nurtured senses of social unity as 'Arabs' over the generations following the Conquests, entailing that closer scrutiny of the names which the early Muslims *did* call themselves is essential to better understand Umayyad-era social boundaries and notions of community, and to probe the story of how the Caliphate's elite populations 'became Arab'.

This chapter studies the identity known as Maʿadd – a name that stands out for its uniquely sizeable footprint in both pre-Islamic and early Muslim-era records. Maʿadd connoted a community greater than a single tribe or confederation: instead, it was the label for a super-tribal collective, via which an individual could articulate membership to the broadest possible community imagined by certain populations in pre-Islamic central Arabia. Maʿadd retained its significance in the post-Conquest period, but during the eighth century Maʿadd receded and then disappeared as a term denoting sense of community. The trajectory of Maʿadd's citation suggests that many groups entered Islam with a Maʿaddite identity which they upheld in varied guises for three or four generations before dropping it in favour of expressing themselves as 'Arab' instead. Such a change transcends semantics – the transition from Maʿadd to *ʿArab* would have required individuals to transform whom they thought they were and how they related to others. This chapter collects the shards of evidence from which Umayyad-era Maʿadd's history can be reconstructed, probing the use of Maʿadd's name, its place in genealogy, history, the articulations of Muslim community and the changing contexts of its citation. The analysis will trace the dissolution of Maʿadd into Arab, uncovering in the process the wrinkles in Umayyad society and power relations as the venture of Islam took its first steps into the world historical limelight.

MAʿADD IN PRE-ISLAMIC ARABIA

In 1889, Goldziher opined that pre-Islamic Arabians were divided into three main groups of Maʿadd, Kinda and Tayyiʾ;[10] in 2000, Zwettler's wider survey of references to Maʿadd in inscriptions and Greek literature (where they are called *Maddenoi*) suggested that Maʿadd connoted 'nomadism'; a view supported by al-Azmeh in 2014.[11] But these surveys each approached Maʿadd with an embedded presumption that pre-Islamic Arabians were 'Arabs', and that references to Maʿadd therefore must denote a subdivision of a larger (and cohesive) Arab community. In the wake of the observation that there was no pan-Arabian 'Arab' community before Islam, we are obliged to re-open the case and appraise the contours of Maʿadd.

Maʿadd makes its early appearance in the inscription at Namara in southern Syria (dated 328 CE) where a group named Maʿadd (MʿDW) is counted amongst the

Arabian peoples subjugated by the king Imruʿ al-Qays.[12] The location of Maʿaddite territory is not expressed, but their context in the Namara inscription suggests a southern Arabian domicile, near Najran on the modern Saudi Arabian-Yemeni border.[13] Maʿadd is also attested in a similar period in two South Arabian Middle Sabaic inscriptions. The 'Land of Maʿadd' (ʾRḌ MʿDM) appears in the inscription Jabal Riyām 2006–17, which does not contain a date, but its editors posit 233–300 CE, making it possibly the oldest reference to Maʿadd in historical records.[14] The second inscription, ʿAbadan 1 is of similar date to Namara (470 of the Himyarite era, that is *c.* 360 CE),[15] and it reports a series of campaigns the Himyaritic kingdom waged against Arabian nomadic groups, including MʿDM.[16] The two Middle Sabaic texts portray Maʿadd as signifying peoples living in central Arabia, somewhat further north than interpretations based upon the Namara inscription posit: it may therefore be inferred that peoples connoted by the name Maʿadd were sufficiently removed from the quotidian milieus of both northern and southern Arabians that both projected Maʿadd into a 'distant' sense of place. Their testimony accordingly does not furnish precise coordinates for a defined 'Land of Maʿadd', and, moreover, the Maʿaddites themselves may have perceived their borders and sense of communal cohesion as fluid, too.

The distance of Maʿadd from the centres of northern and southern Arabia imperial cultures also manifests in its infrequent mention in South Arabian inscriptions which do not appear to mention Maʿadd again for two centuries after the two Middle Sabaic inscriptions noted above. MʿDM reappears circa 550 when the Aksumite Ethiopians occupied South Arabia and pushed northwards in an attempt to assert influence in central Arabia. The Aksumite commander, Abraha, left three records of his campaign where he refers to his war in the 'land of MʿDM',[17] taking possession of 'nomads of MʿDM',[18] and his strategic step of forcing ʿAmr b. al-Mundhir (the northern Arabian Lakhmid king) to surrender a hostage and accept a South Arabian ruler over MʿDM.[19]

It is difficult to prove that the MʿDM of Abraha's inscriptions are exactly the same group as the MʿDM of the Middle Sabaic texts inscribed two centuries earlier. The coordinates of Abraha's wars place Maʿadd more firmly in central Arabia than the Namara inscription suggests, and further sources about Maʿadd in this period complement Abraha's record. The mid-sixth century Byzantine writer Procopius refers to *Maddenoi* as a central Arabian group within Himyar's sphere of influence,[20] and the appointment of a Lahkmid ruler over Maʿadd by a South Arabian emperor also survives in an Arabic literary memory recorded in Ibn Habib's (d. AH 245/859 CE) *al-Muhabbar*, one of the earliest extant collections of pre-Islamic *Arabica*.[21] *Al-Muhabbar*'s names are different to Abraha's Inscription Ry 506: Ibn Habib calls the viceroy 'Hujr b. ʿAmr', but does identify him as a Lakhmid. Thus, it accords with the spirit of Abraha's inscription. However, while Arabic literature remembers the name 'Abraha' in other contexts, *al-Muhabbar* identifies the South Arabian king as 'Tubbaʿ Abu Karib', a mostly legendary pre-Islamic Yemeni world-conqueror figure in Arabic literature. The shifts indicate the considerable opacity of even mid-sixth-century Arabian history for Arabic writers in the early Muslim period. However, there was evidently some continuity of Maʿaddite memory, and while the earliest Maʿaddite history remains speculative, we can discern Maʿadd's geopolitical position in the

mid-sixth century: MʿDM/*Maddenoi*/Maʿadd signified a recognised people occupying territory beyond the usual northern reach of the South Arabian Himyarites and beyond the regular southern control of the Lakhmid and Ghassanid groups on the Byzantine-Sasanian-Arabian frontiers, thereby occupying an area outside the direct territorial control of the sixth-century's major powers, though each of those powers tried to nudge into Maʿadd's land through allies and viceroys.

Our reconstruction of sixth-century Maʿaddite history can be much augmented by pre-Islamic poetry. Whereas the inscriptions and Greek literature describe Maʿadd in rather laconic expressions from the perspective of outsiders, Arabian poetry invokes Maʿadd as a term for 'self', and unfurls the meaning and significance of Maʿaddite community for pre-Islamic central Arabians. Quantitatively, Maʿadd's importance is self-evident: nearly every collection of pre-Islamic poetry and the oeuvres of most major pre-Islamic poets contain at least a few lines in which the name appears. Qualitatively, the corpus is consistent in summoning the name Maʿadd as a byword for a broad sense of community. For example, consider al-Aʿsha's praise of his kin-group, the Qays:

> Our men, who, when the chargers of Maʿadd are gathered
> Are most respected and awed.[22]

When al-Aʿsha articulates how his kin's warriors stand a cut above all others, we might expect the poet to summon the word that connoted the largest conceivable community as imagined by him and his audience, and upon the cusp of Islam, that term was 'Maʿadd'. Likewise, al-Nabigha al-Dhubyani praises the tribal leader al-Nuʿman b. Waʾil al-Kalbi by invoking Maʿadd:

> You outstrip the nobles in nobility
> Like a stallion outstrips hunting dogs in the chase,
> You surpass all of Maʿadd as a patron sought and enemy feared,
> From the abundance of praise, you are its first recipient.[23]

Again, if a collective greater than Maʿadd existed, would not the panegyrist's voice mention it instead? Likewise, al-Akhnas b. Shihab, poet of the Taghlib, marshals Maʿadd as a means to boast of his own clan's primacy:

> All people of Maʿadd have their tribes
> And each have their safe havens.
> But we have no mountain strongholds,
> Only swords of formidable repute.[24]

Zwettler interpreted the presence of Maʿadd in the poetry of militarised central Arabian groups as evidence of a community of 'progressive Northern Arabs' whose adoption of the horse for warfare connected them to the Sasanian sphere of influence,[25] but these poets never refer to their community as 'Arab' nor use the name 'Arab' in their poetry, and, moreover, the idea of Maʿadd spread further than Zwettler's model, as even non-horse raiding groups of the Sarat Mountains in the Hejaz invoke

Maʿadd to express their sense of community. For example, Abu Dhuʾayb al-Hudhali addresses his lover:

> Any woman of Maʿadd is dear to us,
> Yet you have been lavished with gifts![26]

The frequent citation of Maʿadd as signifier of 'all people' is also underlined by the emergence of the name Maʿadd in rhetorical devices known as merisms: figures of speech in which two contrasting words or opposing characteristics are used together to express an entirety. For example,

> Lament for him: the best of the barefooted and the sandal-wearers of Maʿadd.[27]

In the poet's context, people either go barefoot *or* wear sandals, and the two opposites therefore necessarily equal 'everyone'; hence the poet lyrically constructs a connotation of 'all people' via Maʿadd. Similar examples include:

> All of Maʿadd, their passionate and their serene (*juhhaluha wa-halimuha*)
> Altogether they shot at us with aggression.[28]

Jahl (passion) and *hilm* (equanimity) were understood as the two opposing natures of mankind. And at the dawn of Islam, Hassan b. Thabit boasted:

> When he settled with us, we defended the Prophet of God
> Against the pleased and dissatisfied of Maʿadd.[29]

The productive proliferation of merisms constructed around the name 'Maʿadd' is particularly telling that pre-Islamic central Arabian poets were engaged in conceptualising a broad community and that they used the name 'Maʿadd' to articulate it.

Further, comparable, examples of Maʿadd in pre-Islamic poetry are detailed elsewhere;[30] the important semantic finding is that when Arabian poets needed to express the idea of 'all people', they took recourse to the word Maʿadd. Maʿadd thus stood for a super-collective communal identity that was neither the property of one tribe, nor a tribal designation itself. Al-Akhnas' poem expressly indicates that tribal lineage-groups existed within a wider consciousness of Maʿaddite community, and across pre-Islamic poetry Maʿadd is marshalled as an entity standing on its own – the name does not appear to occur in the familiar composite *Banu Maʿadd* ('Sons of Maʿadd'). Likewise, there is only one reference where a poet describes an individual's sovereignty (*mulk*) over Maʿadd,[31] indicating that Maʿadd was not always a fixed political entity to be *owned*, but was instead an idea, to which people *imagined* their belonging. Together, these attributes articulate the pan-family idea of 'all of us' – the typical hallmarks of an ethnonym.[32]

The poetry accordingly asks us to conceptualise Maʿaddites as a distinct people, who were clearly aware of their distinctive unity and believed that the name 'Maʿadd' articulated it. By bringing the poetry into dialogue with the references to MʿDM in pre-Islamic inscriptions, we can situate boundaries of Maʿaddite

community in central Arabia, circumscribing a large array of nomadic and semi-nomadic groups whose relatively remote geographical position and militarised society kept them independent from Ghassanid, Lakhmid, Himyarite, Byzantine and Sasanian control.

The 'middle ground' between the empires of Late Antiquity was thus not empty,[33] but instead nurtured a sense of solidarity between groups sharing apprehension towards the surrounding powers, and valuing their own martial independence. It is crucial to note that the name 'Arab' is absent in both pre-Islamic poetry and inscriptions;[34] the poets give ample evidence of their intention to articulate the identity of their community, and they clearly did not imagine it via a pan-Arabian sense of 'Arabness'. The absence of the name 'Arab' in the poetry alongside the exceptional emphasis on Maʿadd and the rhetorical varieties in the way the term was invoked to express the idea of 'whole community' means that the independent central Arabians of the sixth century and up to the dawn of Islam imagined their community as not inclusive of all peoples across the entire Arabian Peninsula, since South Arabians and those on the borders of the northern powers were not expressed as part of Maʿadd. Further contour to such impressions appears in an intriguing line of poetry ascribed to Hatim al-Taʾi, the famed pre-Islamic poet of the Christian Tayyiʾ who was proverbial for generosity:[35]

> Their God is my Lord, my Lord is their God:
> So I swear, without a drawl (*la arsu*), I don't speak like Maʿadd (*atamaʿdadu*).[36]

The verse survives alone, without context in the manuscript of Hatim's poetry collection, and its only other citation is in al-Shahristani's *al-Milal wa-l-Nihal*,[37] a source not usually relied upon for pre-Islamic poetry; however, it may indeed provide insight into communal difference in the period shortly before Islam. Hatim's Tayyiʾ tribe are commonly linked within the Lakhmid sphere of influence in the northern Syrian Desert, and variations on the name Tayyiʾ were also the primary means by which Syriac writers and Sasanian officials referred to all Arabians. Such prominence of Tayyiʾ from the perspective of north Arabia is thereby suggestive of a communal boundary between the Tayyiʾ and central Arabians, whom we can identify as Maʿadd. It is thus interesting that the Tayyiʾite poet considers his language different from Maʿadd. Thereby he mirrors the familiar pattern in communal identity formation in which cultural difference of language and faith (which he marshals alongside language) are presented as means to embody political-spatial communal boundaries; Tayyiʾ – in the north and allied towards the Sasanians – felt distinct from the more southernly, more independent, peoples of Maʿadd.

The political map of pre-Islamic central Arabia thus could be divided by tentative lines demarcating tribes, but any such divisions were subject to a wider sense of community shared amongst a people: the Maʿaddites. From one of sundry groups mentioned in the fourth-century Namara inscription to a super-tribal identity by the dawn of Islam, Maʿadd's growth indicates a key process of ethnogenesis in late antique central Arabia which was enabled by the limits of effective control from the Fertile Crescent and South Arabia; an array of nomads and semi-nomads perceived common interests and culture and imagined a community which they called Maʿadd.[38] The Maʿaddites' culture and language may have been similar to groups to the North

and South, but there were political boundaries of alliances and relationships with empires which are crucial to consider when speaking about Arabian society before Islam. The narrower confines of Maʿaddite self-identity within central Arabia suggest rather strongly that the political boundaries did indeed block social cohesion, and we should take Maʿadd as a social identity as seriously as the pre-Islamic poets did.

Given the absence of any similar evidence for the existence of an 'Arab' community, uncovering the Maʿaddites adds necessary considerations to the history of Muhammad's prophecy, since it is evident that he did not enjoy the luxury of preaching to a cohesive audience across Arabia. For at least a century before Muhammad, central Arabian nomads and semi-nomads were accustomed to calling themselves Maʿadd and to drawing social boundaries between themselves and surrounding peoples. Muhammad's message would therefore need to break into Maʿadd, winning over those people and compelling them to share a sense of faith community with others whom they had formerly resisted. The traditional sense that all Arabians were an interchangeable array of 'tribes' which could be reassembled into a Muslim *umma* with little social aftereffect thus needs correction, and raises the important question of how the spread of the new confessional identity of 'Muslim' interacted with the communal identities of Maʿadd and other non-Maʿaddite adherents. For answers, it is necessary to take move beyond the earlier assumptions that it connoted 'nomad' or a sub-designation of pre-Islamic 'Arab', and that it had no specific Muslim-era significance.[39] Maʿaddites were a people with a sense of independent community which they imported into early Islam.

A question of method

Before undertaking an analysis of Muslim communal histories, a brief note on the evidence is in order. Poetry has helped to uncover the contours of Maʿaddite communal consciousness, and a critical student might question whether poetry is a reliable witness. The poetry was only collected in writing between the eighth and tenth centuries – that is, at a remove of multiple generations from pre-Islam (and also significantly later than the Umayyad contexts we will examine next); some have voiced concerns that the corpus may be fabricated, thus depriving us of the legitimate pre-Islamic and Umayyad voices we seek.[40]

While the complexities of the early Arabic poetic corpus do elicit trepidation, in the case of Maʿadd, the extreme critique would appear too hasty. First, our starting point was grounded in pre-Islamic inscriptions and literature where *Maddenoi*/Maʿaddites are attested, and hence the poetic references to Maʿadd do not attest an imaginary community of which no one else was aware. Second, poetry is somewhat more robust a source than prose – poetry's meter and rhyme make it easier to remember and more difficult to alter than prose accounts of historical events.[41] Hence the now well-established observation that Arabic prose accounts of early Islam were substantially reworked by later Muslim historians does not neatly translate into a *prima facie* case against poetry. Also unlike prose, poetry resists 'cleaning' by later hands: for reasons of meter, names of places and people cannot be simply replaced by more convenient retrojections, and as regards Maʿadd, metrics prevent later poetry narrators from replacing references to Maʿadd with, for example, *ʿarab* or another expedient anachronism of choice. Thus, whereas prose writers of Islam's history could rework

stories of originally Maʿaddite groups to make them appear as one cohesive 'Arab' venture, poetry is not so mutable, and the survival of references to Maʿadd are thus something of an 'inconvenient truth'. Lastly, the poetic corpus speaks to us with much consistency in its marshalling of Maʿadd to describe communal belonging – the sheer volume of citations and their semantic coherence suggests that pre-Islamic central Arabia (and, as we shall see next, the elite circles of post-Conquest Syria and Iraq) was indeed a Maʿaddite world.

MAʿADD, MUHAMMAD AND THE CONQUESTS

The intriguing facts that the Qurʾan makes no allusion to ethnic Arabness, and that reference to Arab unity is likewise absent in the memories of Muhammad's strategies to unify his community,[42] emerge as quite logical corollaries of Arabia's divided social fabric at the dawn of Islam. Pre-Islamic Maʿaddite sentiment reveals boundaries delineating different senses of belonging, and Muhammad's followers in Medina seem to have imagined themselves as distinct too. We apprehend this from the absence of inclusive ethnic tones in Qurʾanic notions of community: the Qurʾan neither refers to the Arab people nor a Maʿaddite community. In accordance with the Qurʾan's silence on Maʿadd and senses of pan-Arabian inclusive community, the poetry of Hassan b. Thabit, one of Muhammad's main poet-spokesmen in Medina, also invokes Maʿadd's name, though usually as an 'other', as a counterpoint to his own people. For instance, Hassan sings the praises of his people's self-sufficiency with the words

> And if, by a Maʿaddite gang or Ghassanid troop
> Our well was threatened, we stood in its defence.[43]

Hassan's poetry is defiantly independent.[44] His boasts allude to Maʿadd, suggesting that the settled Aws and Khazraj clans of Hassan and Muhammad's Medina perceived a distinction between themselves and the more nomadic groups of Maʿadd, but were nonetheless in close contact with them:[45]

> We've dealt equity to all of Maʿadd:
> Recompensing ill for their ill; goodness to their grace.[46]

Here, Hassan marshals Maʿadd as a means to articulate the 'outside' – an entity his audiences could recognise as standing for the world beyond the Medinan community.

Poets of Mecca at the dawn of Islam also seem to eschew the term Maʿadd to identify themselves, and there are only few exceptions. One *rajaz* poem ascribed to Saʿd b. Abi Waqqas contains Saʿd's description of himself as the 'peerless archer of Maʿadd',[47] yet from the myriad poems in Ibn Hisham's Prophetic Biography (*al-Sira*), Maʿadd's name is only invoked 11 times to connote 'all people', and six of these are ascribed to Medinan poets.[48] Maʿadd does not readily appear in other sources of Meccan poetry, either, and where it does, there are intriguing interpretations, for example the pre-Islamic Meccan Abu ʿIzza ʿAmr b. ʿAbd Allah refers to himself being 'set astray amongst Maʿadd' when he was expelled from Mecca after contracting

leprosy,[49] suggestive that, like the Medinan Hassan b. Thabit, Meccans viewed Maʿadd as an outsider community too.

Whether or not the Quraysh imagined themselves as Maʿaddites at the dawn of Islam accordingly requires further study, but at this stage indicators lead us to observe that Meccan poets marshal 'Maʿadd' with noticeably less frequency than other central Arabians, and it may be the case that urban populations did not imagine such strong communal ties with surrounding nomads. In this vein, it is intriguing that Muhammad eschewed personal identification with Maʿadd too: hadith ascribed to the Prophet himself make scant reference to Maʿaddite community, and both the Qurʾan and hadith makes several negative comments about nomads (*aʿrab*).[50] Herein, a line of poetry in the *Sira* adds another angle for consideration, as a poet-convert to Islam ʿAmr b. Salim al-Khuzaʿi challenged a central Arabian non-Muslim leader Anas b. Zunaym with a long poem that opens

> Are you really the one who guides Maʿadd?
> No! It is God who guides them and he calls you to convert![51]

Anas reportedly presented himself to the Prophet shortly afterwards and converted. Towards the end of the Prophet's life, when the event is said to have occurred, Muhammad's community was spreading into central Arabia, and one could perhaps consider that it would have challenged old divisions and attempted to subsume Maʿadd under God's community. Hence Maʿadd would not be an identity for Islam to promote, thereby explaining the absence of express Maʿadd-ness in the hadith.

If it was the case that Muhammad initially sought to articulate a new kind of community based in a Hijazi urban environment outside of the main Maʿaddite power groups, within but a few years of his death, his message spread, and increasing numbers of new adherents hailed from nomadic groups who had considered themselves Maʿaddites, and these warriors constituted the backbone of the Conquest armies.[52] The absence of overt Maʿadd-ness in memories of Muhammad's lifetime followed by the massive expansion of believers in the following decade thus point to a social watershed whereby Muslims had to invite Maʿaddites into the fold. Such Maʿaddite groups constituted the militarised majority of the nascent Caliphate's power structures, and the circumstances seem to explain why early expressions of community surrounding the Quraysh-Qudaʿa-Thaqif leadership in Umayyad Syria are often Maʿaddite.[53] The early Umayyad nexus of power and Maʿadd was perhaps quite imaginary – a telling example appears in the history of the Syrian groups of Qudaʿa who outright fabricated a place for themselves within Maʿaddite genealogy to curry favour and insinuate solidarity with the Sufyanid Umayyads (Qudaʿa then changed their minds definitively after the second *fitna*, shifting away from Maʿadd and towards different affiliation).[54] The identity of Qudaʿa and the Maʿadd genealogy asserted by Umayyad elite groups underlines the 'ethnic' character of Maʿadd: it was an idea for communal organisation, not a fixed political entity, and membership was fluid enough to accept new members as the ascent of Maʿadd's star via the success enjoyed by the warriors of early Islam made it a valuable social asset attracting new groups.[55]

The populating of early Muslim communities with Maʿaddites poses several questions. It is worth considering how Maʿadd 'changed Islam' – by all indications, Muhammad's immediate community was not a Maʿaddite concern, and hence the influx of central Arabian nomads and semi-nomads during the Prophet's last years and especially over the subsequent generation of Conquests could have altered the character of Muslim identity and culture.[56] And on the flipside, we shall also like to ask how Islam 'changed Maʿadd': what happened to Maʿaddite community when its members became Muslims and how did they express their identity in the Umayyad period? The latter set of questions is the subject of the rest of this chapter.

MAʿADD AND THE UMAYYADS: THE EVIDENCE OF POETRY

A central consideration of Maʿaddite identity in early Islam is the change in the locales where the ideas of Maʿadd community were being imagined. Shared consciousness of common space is a lynchpin of group identity, and we have seen that Maʿadd grew in importance before Islam by virtue of the space in which it existed: the congruence of common interests within the central Arabian region created in the space between the maximum reach of the surrounding imperial powers nurtured Maʿaddite communal belonging. The boundaries of pre-Islamic Maʿaddite identity were accordingly set around the cultures and spaces of central Arabian nomadic and semi-nomadic groups, but following the Conquests, Maʿaddites could no longer look to Bedouin culture and central Arabian space as a means to delineate their community since 'Maʿadd space' effectively moved from central Arabia to the Fertile Crescent.

A Maʿadd-less desert

Evidence for the shift in the loci of Maʿaddite communal consciousness after the Conquests emerges from analysis of Umayyad-era poetry composed in Arabia. Unlike the pre-Islamic Arabian poets, who, as we have seen, made frequent and consistent reference to Maʿadd to describe themselves, Umayyad-era Arabian verse bears the distinct difference of being Maʿadd-less. For instance, the 450-page *Diwan* ascribed to the Meccan Qurashite ʿUmar b. Abi Rabiʿa (perhaps the largest surviving collection of Umayyad-Arabian verse) contains only one line mentioning Maʿadd:

> Maʿadd affirms that we are the most generous:
> Unstinting givers to both petitioner and guest.[57]

This expression of Maʿadd is manifestly readable as: 'Everyone affirms …', an allusion conforming to pre-Islamic usage where Maʿadd stood for 'all people', however, it is remarkable for its exceptionality in ʿUmar's oeuvre. Whereas the much smaller surviving compilations of pre-Islamic poets each contain multiple references to Maʿadd,[58] the sense of community expressed in ʿUmar's poetry revolves around the more restricted world of Quraysh (my readings of his *Diwan* neither found reference to 'Arab', nor any other super-tribal communal label/ethnonym).[59] Quraysh is the

only group identity ʿUmar mentions multiple times,[60] most sub-groups appearing by name are Qurashite too,[61] and almost all toponyms refer to Mecca and its environs. The emphasis is in part explainable since ʿUmar's principle 'quest' as the hero of his poetry was the pursuit of love interests amongst the various pilgrim groups arriving in Mecca for the Hajj, but though some of the girls hailed from further afield (he mentions the Ṭayyiʾ, Tamim and a number of 'Iraqis'),[62] many were Qurashite.[63] Since the Quraysh are identified as the pre-eminent Maʿaddite group in Muslim genealogies,[64] it is puzzling that the Qurashite ʿUmar, for whom boasting was a staple theme, attaches so scant importance to Maʿadd, ignoring the evidently powerful idea of Maʿaddite community as a means to extol himself. By seeking to explain the absence of Maʿadd in ʿUmar's poetry, our search can begin to uncover some of the layers of different communal consciousness attendant upon Islam's rise.

Drawing inferences about Arabian identities from ʿUmar's poetry must be done cautiously since ʿUmar's poetic persona is quite unlike pre-Islamic poets, especially in his formal departures from traditional styles and his excessive focus on detailing narratives about his amorous adventures.[65] His novel form of love poetry is also much analysed. It is usually said that his style stems from an environment of luxury and song in the Umayyad-era Hijaz, where a lack of political interest and too much free-time bred brazen lovers such as ʿUmar.[66] But following such narratives to conclude that ʿUmar makes no mention of Maʿadd because his world was politically disinterested, would read politics rather narrowly as something confined just to conflict and overt factionalism. Maʿadd had constituted a form of community, and its near-complete disappearance in ʿUmar's oeuvre may signal that noteworthy societal changes were afoot. Moreover, studies tend to conceptualise ʿUmar, the person, as indivisible from ʿUmar, the poet persona.[67] While ʿUmar's verse is devoted to love poems, his quotidian life negotiated a real and politically charged environment, and hence claims of ʿUmar's total depoliticisation are mistaken. The ways that early Umayyad-era Mecca's underlying historical context shaped ʿUmar's persona can be discerned in several ways – and in particular, by exploring the power relations intertwined between Meccan space and Qurashite status and kinship.[68]

While the primary competition and warring between Muslim groups had switched from Arabia to Syria and Iraq by 657 (when ʿUmar was about 12 years old), ʿUmar's home of Mecca remained a politicised space by virtue of the annual Hajj pilgrimage. Power relations manifesting in leadership of the Hajj and partisanship in the performance of its rituals are noted,[69] and more important still, the Caliphate's emergence as a pan-Arabian political entity provided Mecca's sanctum with the backing of a coercive power which could, for the first time in Mecca's history, demand wide-scale Arabian participation in the Hajj.[70] Mecca's transformation into the centre of Islam's political-spiritual universe elevated its denizens from custodians of a central-western Arabian shrine to custodians of *the* shrine of a vast imperial venture; and for ʿUmar, the tangible ramifications of Mecca's rise immeasurably abetted his amorous opportunities and confidence. ʿUmar's Meccan domicile was most fortuitous: by the time he reached puberty, girls across Arabia were quite literally compelled to come to him on an annual basis. While ʿUmar's poetry relishes the accounts of his daring visits to lovers' camps, the poetry is equally excited that the religious system into which

ʿUmar was born had the distinct benefit of guaranteeing a continuous flow of new girls: upon sighting an Umayyad princess pilgrim from Syria, he wished

> If only Hajj month was upon us more often:
> Visits to the Sanctum obliged every two moons![71]

And, tellingly, when God is mentioned in ʿUmar's poetry, He is often called not by name, but instead by sobriquets referring to the Hajj, such as 'Lord of the Pilgrims' and 'Lord of Mecca's Sanctum'.[72] When we observe, therefore, that ʿUmar represents the literary emergence of a new kind of brazen love poet, it would be remiss to overlook that this novel literature emerged contemporaneously with a novel hegemonic sacrality in Mecca. ʿUmar's opportunity and capacity to imagine himself as a lover of legendary appeal was gifted to him by virtue of Qurʾan 22:27's order for believers to perform the Hajj and the Umayyads' insistence on enforcing it.

Coupled with the advantages of ʿUmar's Meccan domicile, his Qurashi kinship looms significantly too, since the Quraysh were both Mecca's guardians and the clan of all the first caliphs. Given the patent religio-political significance of his hometown and his people, ʿUmar has most to gain from asserting Quraysh-ness, which is reflected in the absence of other identities expressed in his poetry, as well as an amusing verse in which a lover comments on the conceit (*khulayaʿ*) typical of ʿUmar's people.[73] Qurashi pre-eminence in Mecca relieves ʿUmar of practical need to make repeated reference to Maʿadd in order to back his boasts as pre-Islamic poets had done: ʿUmar's personal boldness couples with his immediate Quraysh community's self-evident superiority. ʿUmar is special (in his worldview) because he is ʿUmar, because he is Qurashite, and because Islam's holiest sanctum is his personal playground.

ʿUmar thereby affords us an intriguing window into a situation where Islam's universal message ironically nurtured a very particularist identity in Mecca. On the one hand, Islam paved the way towards homogenising communities across Arabia by binding them to its creed, rituals and festivities, but in so doing, the community that possessed Islam's spiritual capital asset was necessarily exalted, and as more people united in making pilgrimage to Mecca, Mecca's custodians could feel increasingly exclusive status. And hence, while we will find in the next section that Maʿaddite identity was important in certain Umayyad contexts in the Fertile Crescent, it had little practical value in Mecca itself. The inclusivity suggested by Maʿadd as a communal label was otiose to the Meccan Quraysh whose superiority was already entrenched via their society's religio-political system, and so Meccan elites were much better served to shrink their sense of homeland to Mecca, and to erect conceptual boundaries separating them from 'ordinary' believers. ʿUmar is firmly in this camp, praising himself and Quraysh and amalgamating all others (including the rest of Maʿadd) into a rump of visiting humanity, and he was not alone in this regard. The more traditional politicised praise and bosting poetry of another early Umayyad-era Qurashite poet, Abu Dahbal al-Jumahi, likewise contains no reference to Maʿadd and instead revolves around a Quraysh-centred world.[74] The trajectories of Islamic belief and power gave Qurashis structural superiority via their possession of the Sanctum, and so it seems a sustainable inference that this led to a Qurashi sense of distinctiveness from other Maʿaddites.

The ostensibly frivolous poetry of Mecca's Umayyad-era elites accordingly betrays central socio-political trends which manifest in the exaltation of Mecca *qua* the unique preserve of the Quraysh, leaving little room for wider identities to assert themselves. The poetry is also one part of the tremendous footprint accorded for Quraysh in Muslim literature, marginalising Maʿadd's role in the core narratives that emerged to explain Islam's rise. But Maʿadd's disappearance is also in evidence across central Arabian poetry, which is even more curious given the central Arabian concentration of Maʿaddite poets in pre-Islam. The most prolific of Umayyad Arabia's desert poets, Dhu al-Rumma, is silent on Maʿadd: across the three volumes of his modern *Diwan*, references to Maʿadd only appear in a single poem which seems in fact to be a later forgery falsely attributed to him.[75] The surviving poems of the itinerant early Islamic-era Arabian al-Hutayʾa have no reference to Maʿadd either, and neither does the prolific poet of Marwanid-era Medina, al-Ahwas al-Ansari.[76] Likewise the chaste Arabian ʿUdhri lover-poets contemporary with Dhu al-Rumma omit reference to Maʿadd too.[77] Their omission is perhaps not so surprising since melancholy lovers have little interest in referencing politics, but there is a wider point at play. Arabian poetry from the Umayyad-era lacks the spirit of its pre-Islamic warriors whose world was manifestly Maʿaddite. Poetic memories from Umayyad Arabia are skewed towards new themes of love, but while these poems perpetuate pre-Islamic motifs (even if to satirise them, as sometimes the case with ʿUmar), one trope remarkable for its absence is consciousness of Maʿadd.

Pursuing Maʿadd through more Arabian poetry yields consistent results. Another sizeable *Diwan* from the northwest Hijaz is the poetry of Kuthayyir ʿAzza – a partisan of ʿAli's descendants, and composer of expressly political poetry – and his oeuvre never invokes Maʿadd as a label of Kuthayyir's sense of local Arabian community. In his 133 extant poems, Kuthayyir references Maʿadd only once, in an elegy to Khalid b. ʿAbd Allah al-Usaydi, an Umayyad who governed Basra at one point and moved in Umayyad circles in Syria:

> Where now is the one whom Maʿadd would nominate
> To carry the burden and provide for sustenance?[78]

Alongside the absence of Maʿadd in the works of the Arabian poets considered above, Kuthayyir's choice to invoke Maʿadd only in a verse about the leadership role of a political figure from the Fertile Crescent draws a significant spatial line; Maʿadd is devoid of the Arabian signification it had enjoyed in pre-Islam, and instead concerns communities further afield. If Maʿadd had signified a generic idea of 'nomad' in early poetry, as formerly suggested,[79] Muslim-era poets, who were participants in the same poetic traditions, would have perpetuated the term when describing nomads. That they did not supports the conclusion that Maʿadd did not signify a way of life, but was rather the term for a specific community: people from central Arabia who no longer resided there after the early seventh century.

The seventh-century Conquests are an evident factor in changing Maʿaddite communal expression. The Conquests moved militarised groups from Maʿadd out of Arabia and into the Fertile Crescent, and consequently left Maʿadd as a hollow idea for Umayyad-era Arabians, whose interests shifted elsewhere. The differential in Maʿadd-citation across the divide of pre-Islam/Islam indicates that the Conquests

were (at least) considerably a Maʿaddite venture; population movement and demographic change are accordingly central factors to weigh in the study of post-conquest society, and, as a result, seventh-century Maʿaddite ethnogenesis was an urban Iraqi-Syrian phenomenon, in distinction to Maʿadd's pre-Islamic Arabian history. The Maʿaddite ethnogenesis in the urban centres of Umayyad Syria and Iraq proposed in this chapter emanates from the contours of Maʿadd identity we encounter in Umayyad-era poetry.

Maʿaddite towns

In the first two generations of the Muslim-era (that is, to the late seventh century) poets in the courts and forums of Iraqi and Syrian political discourse did not use the name 'Arab' to refer to their broad sense of community,[80] and instead, many perpetuated the pre-Islamic Arabian tradition of referring to themselves via the label 'Maʿadd'. Examples are widespread in poetry collections and verses recorded in prosimetric narratives about the Umayyad era: for example, al-Baladhuri reports a poem composed ʿUdayl b. Farkh al-ʿIjli during the early second *fitna* conflict in Iraq, the poet uses reference to Maʿadd to praise Malik b. Masmaʿ, a Basran nobleman who defended his town's elite from one of the governors of Musʿab b. al-Zubayr:

> Across all Maʿadd there is none like Malik
> Of blazing nobility, of fearsome countenance.[81]

Akin to the pre-Islamic conventions, Maʿadd is invoked here with manifest intention to conjure the totality of the Basran panegyrist's audience. Similarly Ziyad al-Aʾjam (d.c. 100/719) praised his companion ʿUmar b ʿUbayd Allah upon his appointment as governor of Fars:

> With secret supplications to God, I hoped
> The affairs of all Maʿadd to be in your charge.[82]

Ziyad evidently intended to express rule in the broadest sense, and chose the communal concept of 'Maʿadd' to articulate it. And in the same vein, the mid-to-late Umayyad-era poet Abu al-Najm al-ʿIjli (d. AH 130/747–8 CE) praises the Iraqi domiciled Bakr b. Waʾil, effusing

> Bakr's forces are grand:
> A peak soaring above the mountain of Maʿadd.[83]

The rhetoric again institutes Maʿadd as the broad community via which the tribal group Bakr's merit was weighed.

In the context of self-praise, al-ʿIjli's Iraqi contemporary al-Raʿi al-Numayri twice invokes Maʿadd to establish his own clan's glory:

> We made our mark amongst Maʿadd –
> The best of the horsemen are ours.[84]

And Maʿadd stands as a means for al-Raʿi to record his clan's victories in the inter-factional rivalry in Umayyad Iraq:

> We bested the Maʿaddites from Dabʿan[85]
> We left Bakr and Taghlib with no place to gather.[86]

Marshalling Maʿadd to establish merit was not confined to the ʿIjl, the Numayr and Iraq: Maʿadd features in six poems of al-Akhtal, a celebrated poet whose oeuvre was directed at inter-group competition and court culture in Syria.[87] For instance, al-Akhtal praises his own people:

> At our door gather neighbours for refuge, guests for food;
> Maʿadd seeks our protection in wars or for their pasture.[88]

In the *Diwan* of Jarir, another of the Umayyad era's most prolific poets, Maʿadd serves its familiar rhetorical purpose too: Jarir summons Maʿadd's name 13 times, including once to roundly chide his poet rival al-Farazdaq:

> Al-Farazdaq is disgraced throughout Maʿadd.[89]

And Maʿadd features in poetic flytings between Jarir and al-Akhtal, where al-Akhtal chided Jarir's ancestors for not fighting at Dhu Qar, a battle remembered by Muslims as a key pre-Islamic victory over the Persian Empire and precursor to the stunning success of the Muslim Conquest of Iraq and Iran. Some scholars today refer to Dhu Qar as an 'Arab *vs.* Persian' battle,[90] but this was not the language invoked by al-Akhtal – he refers to the Arabian combatants by the familiar ethnonym Maʿadd, underlining the essential Maʿaddite (not 'Arab') identity of central Arabians in the generations immediately before and after the Conquests.[91] Al-Akhtal's verse poses the rhetorical question to Jarir:

> Did you assist Maʿadd on the ferocious day,
> Like we supported Maʿadd at Dhu Qar?[92]

The substance of the Dhu Qar boasts are detailed elsewhere;[93] what is pertinent for present purposes of evaluating Maʿadd as an identity is the accrual of historical memories around the idea of Maʿaddite community. That al-Akhtal conjures memories of the Battle of Dhu Qar in terms of Maʿaddite lore reveals how the memory of pre-Islamic Arabian events became the property of Muslim-era Maʿaddite communal consciousness. Although the actual Battle of Dhu Qar pitted only a small number of clans against a Sasanian border force, al-Akhtal's Umayyad-era version of the battle elevates it to a moment when Maʿadd's collective honour and glory were hazarded. Such reconstructions of a shared history to accompany the shared name are key building-blocks of an ethnos and reveal the vitality of Maʿadd as an emotive Umayyad-era identity.

The contexts and connotations of Maʿadd in Umayyad poetry from the Fertile Crescent betray direct legacy from pre-Islamic poetic tradition. Akin to Maʿadd's sixth-century connotation of militarised central Arabian community, Umayyad-era

poetic Maʿadd signalled a means to hearken the conqueror collective – 'all of us'. Maʿadd signified specific people, it had its history, and it was the measure of glory, merit, power and disgrace. The poets would not have so frequently marshalled Maʿadd's name unless it spoke directly to a tangible sense of communal identity. With only one exception, considered below, Umayyad-era poets also continue to cite Maʿadd alone without the *banu*-prefix of tribal groups, which implies that Maʿadd retained its pre-Islamic form and meaning as the super-tribal collective of an expressly self-aware people.[94] The poetry leads its listeners to imagine that the Muslim towns (*amsar*) were populated by groups who conceptualised their community as an array of different clans and factions, but with a theoretical unity which for many was expressed as Maʿadd. The sub-groups were in competition with each other, and the spoils of conquest augmented the scope of rivalry, but they perpetuated a sense of Maʿadd-ness which would have been a useful social asset in maintaining their status as a group distinct from conquered populations across the Fertile Crescent. While other texts indicate that conquerors also began calling themselves 'Emigrants' (*muhajirun*) in early Islam to reflect their shifts in domicile and new faith,[95] the idea of Maʿadd survived from pre-Islam and amongst the many identities available to conqueror elites, poets and their people remained, by their own protestations, Maʿaddites in early Islam.

CONTINUITY AND CHANGE: MAʿADD AND UMAYYAD POWER

Maʿaddite social organisation also informed idioms of Umayyad sovereignty. A poem by Abu Nukhayla praising the Caliph Hisham b. ʿAbd al-Malik (r. 724–43) addresses the Caliph as 'Lord of Maʿaddites and non-Maʿaddites' (*rabb Maʿadd wa-siwa Maʿadd*),[96] the Caliph al-Walid b. Yazid's (r. 743–4) poetry *Diwan* contains a reference to his entourage as 'the elite of Maʿadd' (*ʿulya Maʿadd*)[97] and Caliphal panegyrists invoked Maʿadd to describe Caliphal dominion and glory. Consider al-Akhtal's verse in praise of the Caliph Yazid b. Muʿawiya (r. 680–3) and his father, Muʿawiya b. Abi Sufyan (r. 661–80):

> Your father was Quraysh's best:
> The most noble, generous and temperate.
> When the going got tough, and Maʿadd was about to flinch
> Your father stood firm as wood.[98]

Whereas Maʿadd was absent in the poetry of the Meccan Quraysh considered above, the Qurashite Umayyad elites outside Mecca embraced an interest in affirming Maʿaddite connections, and it would seem that the difference between Meccan and Syrian/Iraqi literary expressions was conditioned by considerations of power and constituency. Whereas Mecca's status was unassailable, the Syrian Caliphal families faced the more complex task of managing a fledgling empire of far-flung borders manned by militarised elites of Maʿaddites, and the articulation of a Maʿaddite imperial identity reflects the caliphs' need to assert solidarity with those military groups.

Continuing the formulae of exaggerated exaltation of Umayyad elites by expressing their superiority over Maʿadd, Aʿsha b. Abi Rabiʿa praises the aristocrat and brother of the Caliph ʿAbd al-Malik, Bishr b. Marwan:

> I had once ranked you the best of *Banu* Maʿadd,
> And now, you have surpassed even yourself.[99]

While the verse ostensibly replicates the typical invocation of Maʿadd to express the broadest communal collective, the poem makes a semantic departure from pre-Islamic and other early poetry in its reference to Maʿadd via the tribalist compound, *Banu Maʿadd* – 'tribe of the Maʿaddites'. As far as my readings have taken me, the phrase is unprecedented: the only other example so far uncovered is in a verse of Ziyad al-Aʿjam, a contemporary of Aʿsha b. Abi Rabiʿa,[100] and the formula has significant effect since it shifts Maʿadd from the stand-alone state as the *ethnos* of central Arabians to the status of a tribe, thereby iterating a seeming demotion in Maʿadd's literary function – a change inviting closer consideration in the light of post-Conquest societal evolutions.

The 'tribe of the Maʿaddites' epithet re-positions the people of Maʿadd from a formerly stand-alone group to one of a constituency of tribal groups, thereby breaking barriers that earlier Maʿaddites had imagined ring-fenced their exclusive community. Such an erosion of Maʿaddite exceptionalism in urban Umayyad-era Islam would tally with the broader social context of the Conquests, since Maʿaddites were not the *only* conqueror group – the nascent Caliphate absorbed groups in Syria and Iraq (Qudaʿa, Ghassan, Lakhm and Tayyiʾ, for example), and sizeable numbers of South Arabians also participated in Conquest campaigns. We noted that some non-Maʿaddite groups, such as Qudaʿa, initially attempted to assimilate into Maʿadd, but Maʿaddite distinctiveness ill-fitted both the theoretically egalitarian messages of Islam's faith community and the practical realities of managing post-Conquest society where all conqueror groups had legitimate claims to membership amongst the elite. The result logically pressured Maʿaddites and compelled them, over time, to rethink their pre-Islamic senses of independent status in order to best fit into the more shared and ethnically diverse urban spaces of the *amsar* conqueror towns. Particular pressure emanated from South Arabians who entered Islam with their own traditions of social organisation, and it seems that a collective sense of exclusion from Maʿadd prompted an array of groups into a separate line of novel ethnogenesis as the *Yamaniyya/Qahtan* faction of 'Yemenis'.[101]

The new demographic combinations experienced by elite groups in early Islam as peoples were thrust into unprecedented networks of power and proximity left their marks on late seventh-century poetry, which bears witness to re-articulations of communal identity and fissures created by new social formation. For example, and with specific respect to Maʿadd, Jarir praises the Iraqi governor Khalid b. ʿAbd Allah al-Qasri with the verse:

> You command the summit of the Maʿaddites
> And your lineage tops the Yemenite heights.[102]

Jarir's inclusion of *both* Maʿadd and Yemen was evidently beneficial to entrench Khalid's eminence in eighth-century Iraq, and speaks to the same spirit as the *Banu Maʿadd* verse above inasmuch as Maʿadd's distinctiveness was blurred when the rhetoric of communal organisation expanded to include more groups. In the same vein, al-Baladhuri reports verses from a Tamimi poet, praising Haritha b. Badr (a Basran commander involved in battles against Kharijites):

> But for Ibn Badr,
> Iraqis have no protector.
> Ask who is the saviour of the right –
> And Maʿadd and Qahtan point to Ibn Badr.[103]

Such formulations in which Maʿadd shares status with an ostensibly equal Yemen/Qahtan are new in Muslim-era poetry: in contrast, pre-Islamic poets do not, according to my readings, cite 'Maʿadd' in such a pair or as a subset of a broader identity. The phenomenon seems best explainable as a consequence of the rise of Yemeni importance as an effective constituency in localised post-Conquest power relations in the close proximity of the *amsar*.

Jarir also evidences new tensions over Maʿaddite belonging in a set of poems directed against his rival al-Farazdaq. Al-Farazdaq had claimed that groups of Qudaʿa were not Maʿaddites (a view the people of Qudaʿa had only just wholly embraced following the second *fitna* AH 60–73/680–92 CE), but for Jarir, an affirmed Maʿaddite, such a slight diminished the power and scope of his community, and his response sought to redress al-Farazdaq's genealogical raid:

> Qudaʿa never sought non-Maʿaddite lineage
> You – Farazdaq – seek to rip them from Maʿadd.[104]

Precisely contemporary with these poems in which Maʿadd is demoted inasmuch as it begins to share what was its former monopoly over the poets' communal consciousness, is the emergence of poetry in which people begin to call themselves Arabs.[105] Poets begin to invoke 'Arab' via the same formulae and with the same rhetorical effect as they had marshalled Maʿadd since pre-Islamic poetic traditions: consider the line of Jarir and al-Farazdaq's contemporary, al-Raʿi al-Numayri who boasts of his kin's merits:

> Numayr is the burning ember of the Arabs,
> Burning all the brighter when war flares.

According to my reading, *ʿarab* did not outright eclipse Maʿadd: mid and late-Umayyad-era poets continued to summon Maʿadd's name, but the marked increase in references to *ʿarab* indicates a distinct and new vitality associated with the Arab idea, and the coincidences are striking. The shrinking of Maʿadd seems to be a barometer tracking the rise of other super-tribal identities such as Yemen and the stirrings of what would become the pan-conqueror identity of 'Arab'.

Our inference that early eighth-century poets were withdrawing from senses of belonging to an exclusive Maʿaddite community in favour of a new process of sharing their 'inside world' with others, also helps the interpretation of a second rhetorical

shift in Umayyad-era poetic citation of Maʿadd. From the early eighth century, the most frequent manner in which Maʿadd appears in poems is via the phrase 'Maʿadd knows that *x*' (*wa-qad ʿalimat Maʿadd* …). Jarir b. ʿAtiyya, al-Akhtal and minor poets too each marshal the phrase to articulate certainty for sundry claims they make:[106] for example Jarir b. Kharqaʾ al-ʿIjli seeks to chide al-Akhtal by reference to the pre-Islamic Battle of al-Hinw, noting:

> Maʿadd knows that on the Day of al-Hinw
> We swept you away like bygone Thamud.[107]

The expression 'Maʿadd knows' is intended to banish doubts as to the poet's truthfulness, and as such, it is translatable as 'Everyone knows', again suggestive that Maʿadd stands for 'all people' in the poet's semantic universe. But it is intriguing that the expression is very rare in pre-Islamic poetry where I have only found one citation,[108] and it appears only four times, according to my reading, in early Muslim-era verse.[109] In contrast, the phrase became a common catch-phrase and the primary manner in which Maʿadd is referenced in eighth-century poetry. The phrase's frequency in later Umayyad-era verse stands in stark contrast to pre-Islamic poetry where there are no formulae surrounding Maʿadd's name. Pre-Islamic poets had been creative when they summoned Maʿadd – almost every example I found is unique to its context, whereas the eighth-century *wa-qad ʿalimat Maʿadd* formula is conversely uniform. Perhaps herein we witness the emergence of a stock phrase, a piece of standardised repertoire which poets could summon to fill the meter. Originally the sentiment would have reflected the sense of pan-Maʿaddite exclusive community, but over time the actual referent retreated into the distance, leaving the phrase a stand-alone rhetorical device, no longer a referent to an actual community. The semantic switch dovetails with the proposed Umayyad context in which poets were becoming familiar with calling themselves 'Arabs' and began sharing Maʿaddite status with Yemenis. As their personal senses of Maʿaddite belonging declined as a meaningful and impassioned identity, the variety of Maʿadd-references in their literature declined in step into a more static formula too.

In sum, the poetry invites us to identify Maʿadd as one of the central social continuities from pre-Islamic Arabia which stood proud in early Islamic Iraq and Syria, but on an increasingly crowded stage which invited reconfigurations of labels and forms of identity. By paying attention to Maʿadd we have enabled ourselves to begin perceiving the different groups at play in the evolving Umayyad Caliphate and thus explain how the polyglot, multi-ethnic peoples of pre-Islamic Arabia who first began to share a meaningful socio-political context in the *amsar* after the Conquests, gradually crafted Arab identities for themselves. From the perspective of Maʿaddites, the changes could elicit multiple responses since demotion or assimilation was at stake. In the process of 'becoming Arab', Maʿadd was either losing its exclusivity to outsider Yemenis and others, or Maʿadd could be proud that its people stood at the centre of the conqueror elite, the primary building block of the new imagined community of Arabs. Prose anecdotes show both these trends at work, and a survey of their meanings rounds our closing section.

MAʿADD AND THE GENESIS OF ARAB IDENTITY

Like poetry, prose literature was only compiled during a protracted process lasting from the late eighth to tenth centuries, and questions of prose's reliability are well rehearsed. For our purposes, however, there are grounds to be sanguine that the prose references to Maʿadd do bear witness to a genuine late Umayyad moment when Maʿadd still enjoyed a central position in communal consciousness. First, a number are hadith recorded in Ibn Abi Shayba's (d. AH 235/849 CE) *al-Musannaf*, a text which has been shown to contain early eighth-century material[110] – precisely the period which we seek to analyse here. A second body of anecdotes derives from late eighth- and ninth-century texts: these are positioned at the earliest end of the recorded literary spectrum, and they allude to various debates over the significance of Maʿadd, indicative that there were disputes about community as Maʿaddite identity was being subsumed into a pan-Arab identity. The first literature was recorded early enough to witness the waning moments of arguments that would disappear by the tenth century when a 'vulgate',[111] that is, a somewhat more consistent account of Islam's rise and Umayyad history, was crafted by Iraqi writers. And moreover, the anecdotes to be discussed in this section are unusual, if not unique in Arabic literature, suggesting their antiquity. It is unlikely that they were the products of ninth- and tenth-century literary invention, since the authors who record them did not call themselves Maʿaddites: they were disinterested from concerns of Maʿadd's merits, and the writers refrain from developing the narratives. The stories are presented to us as bare facts, 'small finds' which acquisitive Arabic writers dredged from earlier mnemonic layers of their traditions – they are necessarily incomplete, but the jagged edges of history which they articulate point to the ingredients, later homogenised, from which Arab history and ethnic identity were constructed. We shall find that in the first phase of imagining an Arab community, the idea of Maʿadd was both a trailblazer and a reactionary force, encompassing a range of emotions and strategies which individuals felt and developed when their Maʿaddite community no longer reflected the pre-Islamic central Arabian defensive worldview, but rather was merging into Arabness, as the elite identity of an unprecedentedly large empire.

Defensive manoeuvres: Maʿadd as the original Arab

By the late eighth century, the scions of the original conquerors articulated their identity in distinctly 'Arab' terms, but the idea that an 'Arab community' could unify conqueror communities was novel: we have noted that neither pre-Islamic Arabians nor very early Muslims referenced Arabness, and thus the Caliphal elites, newly conscious of being 'Arabs', were in need of inventing a family tree and traditions to unify the various groups of conquerors. They would also need to project such trappings of Arab identity backwards into pre-Islamic time to give the new Arab communities the requisite feelings of deep-rootedness in antiquity, a critical discourse underwriting the creation of an ethnos.[112] In this environment of inventing Arabness, Maʿadd was a major stakeholder: the Umayyad Caliphal families and many elites had called themselves Maʿaddites, and their Maʿaddite heritage needed strategic re-working in order that they could call themselves 'Arabs'.

The new Umayyad-era Arab ethnos was theoretically socially levelling since it offered to place all Arab groups on an ethnically uniform field, and hence Arabness risked depriving Maʿadd of its intrinsic exclusivity. But Maʿaddites could try to retain their superiority amongst the wider community of Arabs if they could construct a multi-tiered conception of Arab identity and establish their Maʿaddite position on the top tier. If, for example, the Maʿaddites argued that Maʿadd was himself the first Arab and that Maʿaddites possessed the most original Arab culture, then all other Umayyad-era 'Arabs' would remain a step below Maʿadd *qua* later joiners to the Arabness communities. As a social strategy of distinction, the construction of a multi-layered Arabness thus enabled Maʿaddites to maintain favourable aspects of the status quo in the changing environment of the post-Conquest Caliphate, and we are fortunate to possess a wealth of anecdotes evidencing such arguments that Maʿadd was the first Arab, and that *both* Arab and Muslim identity was originally imagined as the property of the sons of Maʿadd.

The clearest development of the Maʿadd *qua* first Arab narrative appears in terms of kinship. The earliest Arabic genealogical treatises, Ibn al-Kalbi's *Jamharat al-nasab*, Ibn Saʿd's (d. AH 230/845 CE) *al-Tabaqat*, Khalifa b. Khayyat's (d. *c.* AH 250/854–5 CE) *al-Tabaqat* and the *nasab* (genealogical) section of Ibn Wahb's (d. *c.*AH 197/812–3 CE) *al-Jamiʿ*, each record versions of a hadith, ascribed to the Prophet himself, that states: 'when Muhammad recited genealogy and reached [the ancestor] Maʿadd, he would stop and then say, "the genealogists lie" '.[113] The hadith intends that any guesses about Arab ancestors before Maʿadd are spurious, and that, by extension, Maʿadd is the oldest ascertainable Arab. Impressions that Maʿadd was synonymous with 'original Arab' also acquired the requisite monotheistic religious tones in a legendary account of pre-Islamic Arabia, first preserved in Ibn Habib's (d. AH 245/859 CE) *al-Muhabbar*, where we are told that the Babylonian Bukhtanassar (Nebuchadnezzar) once raided Arabia, putting most of its inhabitants to death, and deporting the rest to Iraq.[114] According to the story, the Arabs would have been snuffed out of existence by this capricious genocide had it not been for the Israelite Prophet Abrakhiya b. Ahniya b. Zarabyal[115] who travelled to Arabia to forewarn of the impending doom. Abrakhiya's mission was to locate the boy Maʿadd, and whisk him to safety before Nebuchadnezzar's arrival. Once Arabia was emptied of its inhabitants, Maʿadd returned – to Mecca (of course!) – where he settled and his seed spread as sole pure line of original Arab blood. Prophecy, sacred space, history and lineage therein all climax in the loins of Maʿadd – a self-evident fictionalisation to explain that Maʿadd is the authentic progenitor of a pan-Arabian Arab people.

In a similar heroic vein, Maʿadd is identified as the originator of other important Arabian social phenomena: al-Yaʿqubi counts him as the first man to domesticate camels and to use them for carrying goods.[116] And the antique connections with prophethood again emerge in a unique hadith preserved in al-Tabarani's *al-Muʿjam al-Kabir*, where we are told

> When the sons of Maʿadd b. ʿAdnan multiplied and counted 40 warriors, they raided the camp of the Prophet Moses (God protect him and give him peace), and Moses cursed them, saying 'Good God, these sons of Maʿadd have attacked

> my camp!' But God then revealed to him: 'Moses son of ʿImran! Curse them not, for from amongst them will rise the Illiterate [*ummi*][117] Prophet, the Warner, the Bearer of Good Tidings of Heaven; their scion will be the Forgiven People, the people of Muhammad.'[118]

Another hadith, reported by the ninth century Ibn Durayd on the authority of Asid b. Zunaym from (the Maʿaddite group) Kinana, engages a similar discourse, relating a story of Muhammad's conquest of Mecca where he is confronted by Asid who exclaims 'Indeed you claim to be the one who has revealed the faith to Maʿadd – yet it is God who guided them!'[119]

Aside from genealogy and prophethood, Arab identity in early Islam could also be defined in terms of language, as early writers argued that the true 'Arabs' were those who naturally speak the Arabic tongue (which also doubled back to prophethood since Arabic was the language of the Qurʾan).[120] Intriguingly, Maʿadd features in the linguistic debates via an unusual phrase used to extol individuals as being 'More correct-speaking than Maʿadd' (*afsah min Maʿadd*). Several eighth-century figures, a poet, a philologist and a hadith narrator – all of them Basran – used the expression to describe themselves,[121] and while we are accustomed to associate the notion of grammatically correct Arabic (*fasaha*) with Arabness in general today, the elative expression *afsah min Maʿadd* again structures the Arabic language as a phenomenon climaxing in Maʿadd, and suggests another angle whereby Maʿaddites sought to carve out their superiority over the trappings of the developing Arab identity.

Combined, the above stories converge as self-evident creations to forge a notion of Maʿadd as constituting a chosen people connected with prophecy at multiple points emanating from a mythic 'world destruction and rebirth' narrative, and the foundation of the Arab-Muslim people. In each of these stories, Arabs are subordinated to Maʿadd, Maʿaddites are not merely a part of a wider Arab ethnos – the exclusivity of pre-Islamic Maʿadd is deftly rearticulated as Maʿaddite exclusivity above the rest of the Arabs. The Iraqi, and often Basran locales of the narrators couples with the frequent citation of Maʿadd amongst the similarly domiciled ʿIjli and Numayri poets surveyed above, and indicates a particular concentration of Maʿaddite chauvinism in southern Iraq where competition between different factions of Arabian peoples and Arab partisanship were engrained in the Umayyad-era social milieu of elite power politics.

Notwithstanding the manifest efforts of certain factions to mythologise Arab origins into a Maʿaddite story, the efforts of Muslim-era Maʿaddites were ultimately unsuccessful: ninth-century Arabic literature witnesses a full-scale withdrawal from the discourses enumerated above, alongside the articulation new trajectories for Arab origins. From the perspective of genealogy, the argument that Maʿadd constituted the earliest identifiable Arab ancestor lost ground to a more ancient-pointing version, positing the Arabs as the children of Ishmael.[122] Maʿadd asserted itself as one of the children of Ishmael, but the prophetic significance of Maʿaddite legend receded to secondary status. It seems feasible that the new Ishmaelite Arab genealogy was constructed on top of an existing Maʿaddite kinship model, since ninth-century sources exhibit much variation in enumerating the lists of ancestors between Ishmael

and Maʿadd, whereas Maʿadd's descendants are consistently depicted.[123] But while Maʿaddite interests may have successfully negotiated the intrusion of Ishmael on to their family at the outset, Yemeni interests added further complexity as they positioned themselves both on the Ishmaelite line (but separate from Maʿadd) or as an even more ancient Arab family group.[124] In the wake of these genealogical inventions, the hadith about Maʿadd's primacy in genealogy was suppressed – it is only scarcely cited in texts post-dating the mid-ninth century, it appears just once in the tenth century,[125] and disappears thereafter, taking with it the idea of the intertwining of Arab origins.

Maʿadd was further degraded by what seems a late eighth-century construction of ʿAdnan – Maʿadd's putative father. The new genealogical models relabelled Maʿaddite tribes as ʿAdnan-tribes, demoting Maʿadd from the status of *the* ancestor to just a son of an older figure. This operation shears away the potent word Maʿadd, and forgets the centuries-old tradition of expressing Maʿaddite communal belonging. The rebranding of Maʿaddites was not uncontested – a revealing argument in Ibn Sallam al-Jumahi's (d. AH 231/845–6 CE) *Tabaqat fuhul al-shuʿara'* makes an impassioned case that Maʿadd is the oldest ascertainable Arab ancestor and that the ʿAdnan figure was a fabrication – as Ibn Sallam was only aware of one verse of pre-Islamic poetry citing the name ʿAdnan, against the evident volume of Maʿadd he was more accustomed to encounter in authentic pre-Islamic verse.[126] Though Ibn Sallam makes cogent arguments, and while other the hadith cited in this section align with Ibn Sallam's opinions on exclusively Maʿaddite Arab ancestry, the Maʿadd camp did not survive, and by the end of the ninth century, texts had essentially forgotten the notion of Maʿaddite community, replacing Islam's origin story as a pan-Arab movement, composed of 'Qahtani' Yemenis and ''Adnani' Northerners. By the tenth century, the Yemeni discourse became hegemonic, asserting that the first Arabs were neither Maʿaddite nor 'Adnanite – but Yemenite, and that only South Arabians represented the pure Arab stock (*al-ʿarab al-ʿariba*), reducing the ex-Maʿaddites as merely 'Arabised Arabs' (*al-ʿarab al-mustʿariba*).[127] The process of Arab ethnogenesis across the eighth century was evidently too broad-based for Maʿadd to control, and Maʿaddite attempts to harness Arabness were lost to the more powerful social process of assimilation.

Reactionary reflexes: distancing Maʿadd from Arabness

Maʿadd's eclipse can also be appraised via what appears as an alternative strand of responses to the broadening Arabness idea. Umayyad-era Maʿaddite community, like any social group, was not absolutely cohesive: in the seventh and early eighth centuries some Maʿaddites were close to the centres of Caliphal administrative power, but the Umayyad Caliphate was also wildly unpopular, especially in Iraq, and Basran and Kufan Maʿaddites were thus not always politically aligned with the interests of theoretically kin-Maʿaddite Syrians. A refracted and spasmodic articulation of community could then be anticipated, and while Umayyad and high-ranking Iraqi Maʿaddites may have generated some of the Arab-looking Maʿaddite stories enumerated above, subaltern Iraqi Maʿaddite groups evidently disagreed and, in the process, left fascinating shards of evidence indicating that some wanted no part of Umayyad-Arab identity. Instead, they looked back nostalgically to a pre-Islamic Maʿaddite past when

there was no sharing of status and exclusivity was absolute. We could call these 'reactionary Maʿaddites', a natural conservative psychological reflex articulated by ex-nomads who found it difficult to cope with the new social realities of being Umayyad.

The reactionary strand appears in Ibn Abi Shayba's *al-Musannaf*, a collection of (mostly) Iraqi hadith and juridical rulings emanating from opinions of scholars in Islam's early generations. In one hadith, we read an exhortation placed in the voice of the Caliph ʿUmar: 'Recite the Qurʾan Arabic-ly (*aʿribu al-Qurʾan*), for it is Arabic (*ʿarabi*). You must act like Maʿadd because you are Maʿaddites (*wa-tamʿadadu fa-innakum maʿaddiyyun*)'.[128] The hadith interprets Arabness as something for the Qurʾan's idiom and separate from a people's sense of community: it may specifically intend to order that the Qurʾan should be read with case endings, but for our purposes, it is material that the hadith explicitly distinguishes Arabic matters from Maʿaddite: Arabic concerns the Qurʾan and language, whereas Maʿaddite refers to a community and a people. The fact that the hadith expressly distinguishes the two also suggests that some Maʿaddites were shifting towards Arabness and away from the sense of their old identity, merging with non-Maʿaddites and/or asserting Ishmaelite Arabness, and prompting a rift within Maʿaddite community and provoking 'reactionary' ire. When read in context with the poetry, this interpretation is rather well supported. The early Islamic period was the precise point when we find Iraqi poets shift to refer to their community as 'Arab' as opposed to the old nomenclature of Maʿadd: such a shift could hardly have gone unnoticed, and the ramifications of Arabness associating Maʿaddites with new peoples can be expected to caused concern amongst some.

Other hadith betray backward-looking attributes for Maʿaddite identity via exhortations to practice the antiquated lifestyle of nomadic militarism. These hadith summon Maʿadd's name in the context of shunning luxury, and they constitute the largest and most widely disseminated references to Maʿadd in the hadith corpus. Amongst their locations in various collections, the section on manners/ethical behaviour (*Kitab al-Adab*) in Ibn Abi Shayba's *al-Musannaf* is an early and revealing arrangement. *Kitab al-Adab* directs attention to behaviour which both behoves Muslims and distinguishes them from conquered peoples, and amongst its sections on the skills fathers ought to teach their sons, archery figures as important.[129] Archery is revealed as a trait of Ishmael[130] with distinct Maʿaddite connections too, since the exhortations to learn archery accompany an array of traits:

> 'Live like Maʿadd (*tamaʿdadu*)! Live rough (*ikhshawshanu*), compete in archery (*intadilu*),[131] walk barefoot!'
>
> 'Scare away the poisonous beasts lest they frighten you! Compete in archery, live like Maʿadd, live rough.'[132]
>
> 'Shoot arrows and ride horses! Shooting arrows is the most preferred. Any form of entertainment other than archery, horsemanship and family is useless distraction.'
>
> 'We saw the men competing in target practice and trash-talking to each other; but at night they worshipped like monks.'[133]

The intertwining of archery, horsemanship, simple clothes, worship at night and Maʿaddite life hearken the environment of the first Muslim conquerors, stressing their martial strengths and difference from conquered communities. The marshalling

of these hadith in the explicit distinction between conqueror and conquered appears in other versions too:

> 'Wear skirts and robes (*ittaziru wa-irtadu*), don sandals (*intaʿilu*)! Live like Maʿadd (*wa-ʿalaykum bi-ʿaysh Maʿadd*)! Beware of finery and the ʿAjam's[134] clothing (*wa-iyyakum wa-l-tanaʿum wa-ziyy al-ʿajam*).'[135]
>
> 'Train without stirrups and gallop your horses![136] Cast away your slippers and wear sandals instead! Cast off baggy trousers and wear skirts! Practice archery, wear Maʿaddite clothes (*al-libsa al-Maʿadiyya*) and beware of the ʿAjam's ways, the worst way is the path of the ʿAjam.'[137]

Some of the hadith are expressed as the opinions of Iraqi jurists, others are put into the voice of ʿUmar b. al-Khattab, and one in the voice of the Prophet himself – but the versions are similar, and it would be sensible to judge the associations with the Prophetic or Caliphal voice as the fruits of authenticity-shopping to elicit greater respect amongst the eighth-century audiences between whom these sentiments were circulated.

In the context of the early eighth century, the exhortations' allusion to an iconic austere and militarised community at the dawn of Islam opens the texts to several levels of interpretation. The fact that the texts do not exhort believers to 'be like Arabs' is significant: the sense of laudable community and past identity is articulated as Maʿaddite.[138] The imperative register suggests that Umayyad-era Maʿaddites were leaving that way of life and availing themselves of the economic fruits of conquest, to the chagrin of more conservative elements. Again, a communal rift would explain such sentiments: as Maʿaddites became more comfortable in the *amsar* towns, as they were assimilating with non-Maʿaddite conquerors into one Arab identity, and as their lives were becoming more like pre-Islamic elites of the Fertile Crescent, memories of a rough-and-ready nomadic world in which Maʿaddites had enjoyed independent high status and in which guise Maʿaddites conquered the Middle East, could become the object of nostalgic desire. Nostalgia invites consideration of 'restorative nostalgia', explored by Boym, who traces very similar proud, stern and backward-looking sentiments in late twentieth-century Eastern Europe.[139] She explains 'restorative nostalgia' is not a wistful, romantic exercise, but instead a fundamentally active impulse to rebuild a lost home and revive a lost nation. The project of reconstruction engages symbols, myths and iconic ideals – such narratives may only tenuously relate to the 'real' past, but the sense of communal loss is genuine: the nostalgic invocations of Maʿadd underline the existence of a real community of people whose struggle to cope with difficult changes and an uncertain future prompted them into taking recourse to retreat from their uneasy present via restoring old, now vanished communal boundaries.

Flowing from the senses of nostalgia, the 'live like Maʿadd' hadith transcend purely political considerations of status, for they highlight a rejection of what the Umayyad-era 'Arab' elite was becoming. Individuals motivated by religious zeal and proud of their past achievements were not necessarily interested in the life of luxury, particularly given the exceptional opulence of the Umayyad ruling elite. The architecture, decoration and finery of Umayyad court life was not only strange for ex-Arabian nomads, but reached levels of lavishness eclipsing the old elites of Late

Antiquity too, and the reactionary Maʿaddite voices accordingly herald what seem to be the earliest expressions of Muslim asceticism (*zuhd*) in Arabic. A range of the 'live like Maʿadd' hadith feature together in one of the earliest extant texts on asceticism, al-Muʿafa's (d. 185/801) *Kitab al-Zuhd* (Book of Asceticism), where the ways of Maʿadd are situated within hadith exhorting Muslims to avoid fine food, clothes and the ways of the ʿAjam.[140] Here we have a pre-mystical, pre-Sufi asceticism expressed around membership of a nostalgic community of Maʿadd where religious purity is not expressed in terms of monastic isolation, but instead in militarised simplicity. The austere form of Maʿaddite identity is far removed from the Maʿadd of Umayyad court poetry – the poetry's Maʿadd was a constituency to dominate, the ascetic represents heated nostalgia for an idealised pre-Caliphal Islam.

CONCLUSIONS

From a self-assured pre-Islamic sense of community, Umayyad-era Maʿadd was, in the end, defeated by social reality. The marshalling of Maʿaddites into Conquest armies compelled their mixing with other ethnic and political groups and physically removed Maʿaddites from the central Arabian space which had originally nurtured their independent identity. The new urban spaces of the Umayyad Fertile Crescent further entrenched the demographic mixing by concentrating the various conqueror peoples within the *amsar* and inaugurating a new political order. Since Maʿadd had not been a wholly cohesive political entity in pre-Islam, the changes attendant upon the Conquests were overwhelming, and the new Umayyad system demanded a pragmatic solution to reorganise the conqueror groups into a new kind of community that could retain the status which the conquerors had won by force of arms in the mid-seventh century. Maʿadd kept an initial hold on post-Conquest communal consciousness and politicking in the Fertile Crescent by virtue of its pre-Islamic traditions, rehearsed for at least a century before Muhammad, but the infighting and vainglorious claims of superiority between Maʿaddites and others jeopardised the wider system. Thus Arabness stepped into the breach as a novel form of community to entrench conqueror status. Although Umayyad-era Arab identity was fitful and unsuccessful as power centres continued to bicker and plunged the system into civil wars, in the long-term, the effluxion of three or four generations spelled the doom for both the reactionary and chauvinistic trends of Maʿaddite communal consciousness which subsided into a wider Arab community that flourished in the early Abbasid era and left its decisive mark on the literary constructions of early Islamic history.

Perhaps most centrally, the fall of Maʿadd stemmed from the very success of Maʿaddite achievements in the Muslim Conquests. The opportunities and riches offered by the Umayyad system and its post-Conquest land tenure were so attractive that a life of nomadism and hardship became simply unpopular and unnecessarily meagre. As in most cases around the world, the outburst of restorative nostalgia is doomed by its rigid fixation on anachronism, and Maʿaddite life followed the usual pattern. As the pace of conquest slowed to a trickle (and even contracted at the end of Hisham's reign),[141] the advantages of the new sedentary lifestyle became ever more apparent. No longer could Muslims be guaranteed territorial expansion – the old

militarised life neither brought material gain, nor was it any longer associated with living memories of its stunning successes in the mid-seventh century. Thus, being Maʿaddite lost its value as either a social asset or a community worth maintaining, and this explains why (if we may borrow from Shelley) now only some scattered poems and shards of prose remain as the ancient proud Maʿadd's 'two vast and trunkless legs of stone … in the desert'.

NOTES

1 The author thanks the British Academy for funding his postdoctoral fellowship (pf150079) during which much of the research and writing of this chapter was completed.

2 Integrating early Islam within the sweep of Late Antiquity is now common (Hirschler and Savant 2013: 11–12). How far early Muslims exhibited affinities with other monotheists (thus perpetuating an 'Islamic Late Antiquity') is likewise much discussed (see Crone and Cook 1977; Sizgorich 2004; Donner 2010), as are the continuities between early Muslim and conquered populations (see Borrut and Donner 2016).

3 The ethnographic/communal lens is particularly necessary. Brown's opinion that Muhammad and the Arabs entered Late Antiquity as 'new participants' (Brown 1971: 200) is still somewhat prevalent – see, for example, the notions of late antique Arabs as 'peripheral peoples' (Hoyland 2015) and/or residents of a 'pagan reservation' (al-Azmeh 2014). See also the chapter by Munt in this volume.

4 The Muslim-era 'invention' of Arab identity was first proposed in Müller (1896: 344), and though banished for a century thereafter, resurfaced in Donner (2010: 217–20) and Millar (2013: 154–8). Hoyland also invokes the idea, but otherwise treats Arab ethnogenesis as a definitively pre-Islamic phenomenon; compare Hoyland 2015: 24–7 and 102.

5 Anderson 1991, for the construction of communal consciousness shared across a wide region, as used by Vermeulen and Govers 1997: 19–22.

6 Webb 2016: 23–156.

7 Retsö (2003: 505–21) and Millar (2013: 154–8) note the absence of 'Arabs' as reference to Arabian peoples in Late Antiquity, Arabness in pre-Islamic literary traditions are further detailed in Webb 2016: 42–9.

8 Webb 2016: 85–8, 141–52.

9 For the use of *muhajirun* as a name of early Muslim communities, see Crone 1994b, Lindstedt 2015, and Webb 2016: 141–5.

10 Goldziher 1967–71: I, 89; see Labid 1962: 216; collections published after Goldziher provide two more examples of the similar formula 'Maʿadd, Kinda and Tayyiʾ' (Imruʾ al-Qays 1990: 198 and Diqqa 1999: II, 501).

11 Zwettler 2000: 280–6; al-Azmeh 2014: 105; al-Azmeh 2014: 120 refers to a 'nebulous Maʿadd'.

12 Namara's inscription is in Old Arabic written in the Nabataean script, causing varied interpretations (see Bellamy 1985; Retsö 2003: 467–73; Macdonald 2015: 75–6, 404–7) – though reading the inscription's MʿDW as 'Maʿadd' seems correct (or at least uncontested).

13 The list proceeds southwards, thereby situating Maʿadd in the region of Najran, or even further south: Bellamy 1985: 46.

14 Arbach and Schiettecatte 2015.

15 Corpus of South Arabian Inscriptions 2013a; Robin and Gajda 1994; Robin 1986.

16 MʿDM is mentioned in lines 19, 27–8 and 29.

17 Inscriptions Murayghān 3, l. 2 and Ry 506 ll. 5–6: ʾrḍ Mʿdm.

18 Inscription Murayghān 3, l. 3.
19 Inscription Ry 506, especially ll. 2–3. Inscription Sayed (Murayghān 2) also noted Abraha's raid against MʿDM. See its online publication: Corpus of South Arabian Inscriptions 2013b; see also Ryckmans 1953; Sayed 1988; Gajda 1997; Müller 2010; Robin 2013.
20 Procopius 1914: 1:19:14.
21 Ibn Habib 1942: 368.
22 Al-Aʿsha 1974: 135.
23 Al-Nabigha al-Dhubyani 1990: 140.
24 Al-Basri 1999: 1:39–40. The poem has multiple versions (see al-Anbari (2003, I: 513–17) who reports the last line as 'We follow the rains, conquering all in our path'), and several additional lines appear mentioning specific tribes. These may be insertions by later narrators to extol their own tribes and/or patrons, but the versions are consistent in presenting Maʿadd as the umbrella under which an array of smaller groups situated themselves.
25 Zwettler 2000: 276–80.
26 Al-Sukkari 1963–65: I:88. Another Hijazi poet, Zuhayr b. Abi Sulma also cites Maʿadd in the typical vein (Ibn al-Anbari 2005: 262).
27 Ibn Hisham n.d.: I,175.
28 Ibn Hisham n.d.: II,25.
29 Ibn Hisham n.d.: II,563.
30 Webb 2016: 70–4.
31 Labid 1962: 257.
32 For the constituent ingredients of an ethnos, see Hutchinson and Smith 1996: 6–7; Anderson's focus notion of a common imagined sense shared by a plurality of (usually elite) voices seems applicable into the past (Anderson 1991). The semantics of Maʿadd point to its use to act as a gel for a community, internally divided, but aware of its difference from more powerful others – herein somewhat akin to the (also ancient) development of Hellas.
33 See White's 'Middle Ground' (2011: 50–3); its theoretical ramifications attendant upon a Middle Ground operating between empires in late antique Arabia are worth more consideration. Certainly, the notion of the 'Empty Hijaz' of late antique Bedouin Arab ethnogenesis and the Arab 'pagan reservation' (al-Azmeh 2014: 40, 262–70) need revision – Montgomery's critique (2006) is a cogent starting point. See now also Munt in this volume.
34 For details, see Webb 2016: 32–49, 66–96.
35 Al-Taʾi 1990: 142.
36 The earliest extant lexicon, al-Khalil b. Ahmad's *al-ʿAyn* defines the verb *tamaʿdad* as 'enduring their life of travelling and camping' (II: 61), though in the context of Hatim's poem, the verse clearly intends speech, and this is how it was interpreted by the compiler. Uses of the verb to connote the life of nomads will be discussed below.
37 Al-Shahristani nd: 703. The version in al-Shahristani does not contain the verb *tamʿadad*, and instead has *ataʿadhdhir*, changing the rhyme and the linguistic connotation; it remains unclear whether the verse is authentic and/or whether it originally contained the rare verb derived from Maʿadd which was changed by a later copyist who did not understand the verse.
38 Anthropological theories of ethnogenesis offer theoretical grounds to explain the emergence of the Maʿadd communal boundaries we find voiced in the texts. (For these in relation to Arab ethnogenesis, see Webb 2016: 9–15, 77–85.)

39 The three previous commentators on Maʿadd, Goldziher (1967–71), Zwettler (2000) and al-Azmeh (2014) each concentrate analysis on pre-Islamic sources, implicitly assuming that Maʿadd was not a substantial Islamic-era phenomenon.
40 Margoliouth 1925 and Husayn 1926; for a more nuanced approach, see Jones 1996: 58.
41 'Vagaries' in the recording of pre-Islamic poetry are amply attested in Montgomery 1997, but such variations are not to be confused with outright fabrication.
42 See Bashear 1997 and Webb 2016: 115–26, 144–51.
43 Hassan b. Thabit 1974: I, 35. Note Hassan names the two most powerful surrounding peoples as the outsider threats: Maʿadd and the Byzantine-allied Ghassan.
44 Claims that Hassan expressed solidarity with a wider Yemeni community are not substantiated in his poetry. A wider-sense of Yemeni-ness does emerge in later generations, but Hassan's poetry itself is restricted to Medina's immediate clans and the horizon of Hassan's poetry's memory concerns the two to three generations before Islam – not more ancient Yemeni lore.
45 Barth notes that the difference in lifestyle and economic function between interacting groups is actually the catalyst for creating senses of ethnic difference (Barth 1969: 15; similar views were developed by Weber 1996: 35). The anthropological sentiment is epitomised in Wallman 1979: 3: 'it takes two, ethnicity can only happen at the boundary of us'.
46 Hassan b. Thabit 1974: I, 36. For other citations of Maʿadd in Hassan's *Diwan*, see I: 18, 109, 199, 366.
47 Al-Baladhuri 1978–: V, 85–6.
48 Ibn Hisham n.d.: I, 45, 128, 129–30, 175, 423, II, 25, 135, 163, 325, 424, 563). Some of these poems, including the *rajaz* ascribed to Saʿd b. Abi Waqqas noted above may be inauthentic, as poetry fabrication in stories connected to Prophetic biography was a phenomenon of which ninth-century Muslims scholars were aware. Of the 11 citations of Maʿadd, one is quite doubtful as it is ascribed to the ancient Qurayshi leader Qusayy, another four verses are ascribed to Abu Talib, Muhammad's uncle, and two Medinan poets Kaʿb b. Malik and Hassan b. Thabit, who were specifically know as targets of forged poetry.
49 Al-Baladhuri 1978–: V, 326.
50 Section 5, below, analyses the few hadith referring to Maʿadd where we shall see that Maʿaddites are not connected to the Prophet's person. For the negative views on nomads in the Qurʾan, see Binay 2006: 78–89.
51 Ibn Hisham n.d.: II, 424.
52 Donner (1981) and Kennedy (2007) discuss the key nomadic element of conquest armies.
53 See explanation below.
54 See Crone 1994a: 44–9. Kister and Plessner date the beginning of the reorganisation of Qudaʿa's lineage to the Caliphate of Muʿawiya, that is, before the second *fitna* began (see Kister and Plessner 1976, 56–8, and *EI*2, 'Kudaʿa' [M. J. Kister].
55 The proposal of ethnic Maʿadd flows from the theory of ethnos as a subjective phenomenon (first articulated in Weber 1996), and observations that kinship is based on a flexible system of 'generated genealogy' whereby kinship is a malleable asset in social interaction (Lancaster 1981: 20–35). Such theories undermine former belief that kinship was fixed, determining *ipso facto* the membership of kin-communities.
56 Some gaps between the 'Ur-Islam' of Muhammad and the developed traditions through the Umayyad period could be traced to changing interpretations of Islam's message by different peoples, particularly Maʿaddites. The different scribal traditions of early Qurʾan *masahif* and the Umayyad chancellery indicate separate cultural producers at work (see Cellard in this volume), the emphasis on orality and hadith collection and the interpretation of Muhammad's *ummi* identity as 'illiterate' could stem from nomadic knowledge

traditions in contrast to scripturalist traditions of Qurʾan recording. Notions of dress, status of women and slavery may also bear Ma'addite tastes on the interpretation of proper 'Islamic' behaviour.

57 ʿUmar b. Abi Rabiʿa 1998: 331.

58 Imruʾ al-Qays, a figure upon whom ʿUmar in part fashioned his own poetic persona, references Maʿadd four times (Imruʾ al-Qays 1990: 134, 198, 207, 269) in a *Diwan* approximately one-third the length of ʿUmar's.

59 The absence of reference to 'Arabs' in ʿUmar b. Abi Rabiʿa's *Diwan* is consistent with the observation that poets only began to embrace the name 'Arab' as a means to describe themselves and their communities in the generation after ʿUmar (Webb 2016: 85–7, 144–51).

60 ʿUmar b. Abi Rabiʿa 1998: 45, 57, 58, 260, 264.

61 For example: ʿUmar names the clans Nawfal b. al-Harith, Fihr b. Malik, ʿAbd Shams and Hashim (ʿUmar b. Abi Rabiʿa 1998: 340, 342, 348, 383).

62 For Iraqis, see ʿUmar b. Abi Rabiʿa 1998: 76, 92, 109, 210, 261, 262, 426 and also 322 (the al-Harith b. Dhuhal clan of Bakr b. Waʾil); Tayyiʾ (264); Tamim (361).

63 Zaki Mubarak (1919: 179) notes that ʿUmar may have refrained from direct references to ascertainable groups so as to avoid scandal, and ʿUmar's *Diwan* frequently suffices by identifying his love interest's people anonymously as *hayy* ('a tribe'), but Zaki Mubarak focused in particular on the inter-Quraysh scandals, and hence many of the vague tribal references may be cover-ups for Quraysh, specifically.

64 Muhammad, Quraysh and Maʿaddite family are the starting point for all extant texts on Arab lineages, even in the earliest textual layers with Ibn al-Kalbi's *Jamharat al-nasab* where genealogy from Maʿadd is directly traced down to Quraysh (Ibn al-Kalbi 2004: 22–130). Note, however, Ibn al-Kalbi's *Nasab Maʿadd wa-l-Yaman* (1988) follows a different pattern where the Quraysh are mostly absent. Subsequent genealogists follow the Quraysh-first pattern.

65 ʿUmar took his cue from the pre-Islamic Imruʾ al-Qays, but his love adventures are much different, he makes numerous departures from traditional styles, and his narrative poems are most innovative – for example the exemplary R poem about Nuʿm (*A min āli Nuʿmin anta ghādin fa-mubkiru* – ʿUmar b. Abi Rabiʿa 1998: 120–7).

66 Dayf 1976: 350; ʿAtawi 1990: 11–18, 27. Jayyusi 1983: 420 makes similar arguments, but with considerably more nuance.

67 Secondary literature on ʿUmar tends to construct his biography as a sum of his poetry, see, for example, Zaki Mubarak (1919: 122–6) whose intention was to connect the emotions expressed in poetry with 'real' life in early Islam; likewise Atawi 1990 and Dayf 1976: 345–50.

68 ʿUmar was reportedly born in AH 23/644 CE, hence his dalliances should fit between the late 650s and 670s – the period preceding the second *fitna* – and this tallies with the very rare political poem in his oeuvre which mentions the death of Musʿab b. al-Zubayr in Iraq in AH 72/691 CE. ʿUmar died circa AH 93/711 CE.

69 The overt aspects of political legitimacy, Hajj leadership and caliphal Hajj participation and patronage are much discussed: see Kennedy 2012: 92–107 for a survey. Munt (2013: 19) notes the political importance of Hajj for the Caliph Hisham, and concludes the rituals' Marwanid-era significance. Hisham and the Marwanids post-date ʿUmar's youth, but McMillan makes a similar argument for the Sufyanids (2011: 48–9). The significance of Hajj in the second *fitna* between the Sufyanid and Marwanid periods is another indication that the shrine and its rituals had politicised importance in earlier periods.

70 Claims of Mecca's pan-Arabian pre-Islamic significance seem anachronistic Muslim-era back-projections. I further detail this in Webb 2013; Webb 2016: 82–3.

71 ʿUmar b. Abi Rabiʿa 1998: 176.

72 ʿUmar b. Abi Rabiʿa 1998: 81 (*wa-alladhi hajja al-hajiju lahu*), 277 (*wa-alladhi ahrama al-ʿibadu lahu bi-kulli fajjin min hijja*), 135 (*wa-man aʿmala al-hujjaju khifatahu*), 44 (*wa-rabb al-bayt*); see also 105, 366, 423.
73 ʿUmar b. Abi Rabiʿa 1998: 426.
74 Almost all groups mentioned in Abu Dahbal's poetry concern the Quraysh and its clans – for example: Jumah (Abu Dahbal 1972: 47, 65), Hashim (61), Quraysh (51, 58, 61, 79). Abu Dahbal, like ʿUmar b. Abi Rabiʿa also lauds Mecca's status as the sacred space of pilgrimage and refers to God via Hajj-related nomenclature (47, 99).
75 Dhu al-Rumma 1972–4: II, 644, 653, 655. The poem's overt and repeated engagement with Maʿadd and other tribal/factional identities are unparalleled in Dhu al-Rumma's oeuvre and suggest later forgery.
76 Al-Hutayʾa's life spanned both the pre-Islamic and early Islamic Eras, but Goldziher and Pellat (*EI*2, 'al-Hutayʾa') view his surviving poetry (narrated by al-Sukkari and Ibn al-Sikkit) as almost all Muslim-era. His Muslim-era life involved much wandering amongst central Arabian tribes, and the absence of reference to Maʿadd given such a context is striking. A large collection of poems ascribed to al-Ahwas al-Ansari survive: they are a mixture of love poetry (somewhat akin to ʿUmar b. Abi Rabiaʿa), and politicised poems in praise and dispraise of governors of Mecca and Medina. His poems are collected in al-Ansari 1990.
77 For example, the *Diwan* of Qays Lubna makes sparing reference to peoples and places: Mecca features (Qays Lubna 1996: 95, 98, 107, 133) and Bisha (56), but both have symbolic significance: Bisha features in pre-Islamic imagery of the beloved, the references to Mecca may be later additions given that ʿUdhri poetry was popular with Sufis for its expressions of chaste love which they interpreted mystically.
78 Kuthayyir ʿAzza 1971: 272.
79 Zwettler 2000: 254, 284; Al-Azmeh 2014: 105.
80 The emergence of 'Arab' as byword for 'all of us' begins to assert itself from the works of late seventh century poets (Webb 2016: 85–8).
81 Al-Baladhuri 1978–: IVb, 219.
82 Al-Aʿjam 1983: 94.
83 Al-ʿIjli 2006: 162–3.
84 Al-Raʿi 2012: 282; see also 296.
85 The poem reads: *Dabʿani Maʿadd*; Dabʿan was the land of the Hawazun, a Maʿaddite tribe, and this expression apparently stood for the Hawazun (see Yaqut 1995: III, 451).
86 Al-Raʿi 2012: 296.
87 Al-Akhtal 1996: 198, 221 421, 451, 487, 489.
88 Al-Akhtal 1996: 489.
89 Jarir 1986: II, 818.
90 Morony 1984: 152–3; *E.Ir.*, 'Dhu Qar' (E. Landau-Tasseron). Al-Azmeh is more nuanced, but retains the 'Arab' flavour of the battle: compare 2014: 118 with 127.
91 The 'Arab' character of the battle's narratives is very likely a function of Abbasid-era historical reconstruction: see Webb 2016: 88–95.
92 Al-Akhtal 1996: 421.
93 Webb 2016: 92.
94 The exception is considered later.
95 See note 9.
96 Al-Isfahani 1992: XX, 408.
97 Al-Walid b. Yazid 1998: 81.
98 Al-Akhtal 1996: 221.
99 Al-Baladhuri 1978–: IVb, 86.
100 Al-Aʿjam 1983: 78.

101 The identity of the *Yamaniyya* faction in early Islam is debated: compare Shaban 1971 with Crone 1994a. Probing the fabric of the mythology and memory constituting the boundaries of Yemeni community reveals further inconsistencies, even in the definition of the geographical ambit of Yemen is unclear (Bashear 1989). The creation of Yemeni community in early Islam is the subject of Webb (forthcoming).
102 Jarir 1986: II, 606.
103 Al-Baladhuri 1978–: IVb, 420.
104 Jarir 1986: I, 461.
105 See note 8.
106 Jarir 1986: I, 202, 366, 246; II, 888; al-Akhtal 1996: 150, 326, 352.
107 Cited in al-Akhtal 1996: 352.
108 ʿAmr b. Kulthum boasts 'all Maʿadd knows that glory is our patrimony' (Ibn al-Anbari 2005: 392); Labid has the phrase: *ʿarafat Maʿadd* – it has a similar meaning of '[all] Maʿadd knows', but is not a set idiom like *wa-qad ʿalimat Maʿadd*.
109 ʿUmayr b. Qays and Abu Unays Mawhib b. Riyah (Ibn Hisham n.d. I, 45, II, 325); al-Aʿwar al-Shanni (al-Basri 1999: II, 931); Zayd al-Khayl (al-Basri 1999: 244).
110 Lucas 2008.
111 Borrut 2011: 168–73.
112 Hutchinson and Smith (1996: 6–7) identify collective history, legends and genealogy as hallmarks of ethnic community.
113 Ibn Wahb 1939–48: 1; Ibn al-Kalbi 2004: 17; Ibn Saʿd 1997: 1:47; Ibn Khayyat n.d.: 2–3. The contemporary poetry critic, Ibn Sallam al-Jumahi, also discusses the ancestry of the Arabs, noting that genealogists 'limit themselves to Maʿadd', evidencing the hadith's spread across discourses (al-Jumahi n.d.: I, 10). Between the various sources, the precise wording differs, but the figure of Maʿadd is the focus as the central genealogical glue.
114 Ibn Habib 1942: 5–7.
115 Ibn Habib's Zarabayal (1942: 6–7) is elsewhere rendered Zarababal (al-Yaʿqubi n.d.: I, 66, al-Tabari 1960–9: I, 558): likely a borrowing from Zerubabbel, a widespread Jewish Apocalypse of the seventh century. The structure of Ibn Habib's 'world destruction and rebirth' narrative mirrors the earlier apocalyptic tradition, and hence points to a later seventh century genesis of the Nebuchadnezzar-Arabia story when Maʿaddites incorporated the tale for their new communal purposes, portraying Maʿadd as an elect, a chosen people in the apocalyptic vein.
116 Al-Yaʿqubi n.d.: I, 222.
117 There is considerable debate over the meaning of *ummi* and its precise association with Muhammad's identity: I have chosen to translate as 'illiterate' here since this is generally how the eighth- and ninth-century transmitters of the hadith interpreted it.
118 Al-Tabarani 1980–: XVII, 103.
119 Al-ʿAskari 1983: III, 931.
120 The arguments to define Arab identity through language in lexicographical, philological and other genres are discussed in Webb 2016: 178–94.
121 The poet is Ruʾba (al-Isfahani 1992: XX, 359–60); the hadith narrator is Jarir b. Hazim who died in AH 170/786 CE or AH 175/791–2 CE (al-Dhahabi n.d.: 229); the philologist is ʿIsa b. ʿUmar who died in AH 149/766–7 CE or AH 160/776–7 CE (Ibn Hajar 1993: II, 70). The anecdotes about both ʿIsa b. ʿUmar and Jarir b. Hazim and one of the two anecdotes about Ruʾba intersect with the prominent Basran philologist ʿAmr b. al-ʿAlaʾ, which suggest a localised Basran epicentre of this phrase in the late Umayyad period.
122 I detail the 'intrusion' of Ishmael into Arab genealogy in Webb 2016: 211–15, see Webb 2016: 235–6 for other scholarly debates and opinions on Ishmael and the Arabs.
123 Webb 2016: 212.

124 The various early attempts to meld Yemeni and Ishmaelite genealogies are detailed in Webb 2016: 213–15.
125 Al-Mubarrad (1936: 1) provides a late ninth century redaction; Ibn Durayd repeats it in the tenth century, but does not follow its strictures, and explains away the hadith philologically, noting that the predecessors of Maʿadd were Arabs, but did not have Arabic names (n.d.: 4–5).
126 Al-Jumahi accepts that Ishmael was an Arab, but also affirms that Maʿadd is the oldest discernable ancestor (al-Jumahi n.d.: 8–9, 10).
127 The emergence of the bi-partite Arab genealogy in early Muslim writings is surveyed in Webb 2016: 215–23.
128 Ibn Abi Shayba 2010: XV, 433. The interpretation of the verb *tamaʿdad* as enduring the rough life of nomads is reflected in the earliest extant Arabic lexicon of al-Khalil b. Ahmad: al-ʿAyn (I, 61). The further examples detailed in this section align with al-Khalil's interpretation.
129 Ibn Abi Shayba 2010: XIII, 416–20.
130 The association of Ishmael with archery is borrowed from Genesis 21:20. Isaiah 21:17 also describes Ishmael's descendants, the Qedarites as archers.
131 *Intadilu* could also mean unsheathe your swords (Ibn Manzur 1994: XI, 665).
132 Ibn Abi Shayba 2010: XIII, 420.
133 Ibn Abi Shayba 2010: XIII, 419–20.
134 *ʿAjam* (or, in most early Arabic writing, *aʿjam*) connotes non-Arabic speakers; following from the Basran notion explored above that equated Maʿadd with the most eloquent Arabic speaker, the *aʿjam* could be conceptualised as simultaneously (or alternatively) non-Arab and non-Maʿaddite.
135 The hadith from Maʿmar b. Rashid's *Musnad* is recorded in al-Sanʿani 1970: XII:84. See also alternative versions of the hadith in the following pages (85–6).
136 Ar. *iqtaʿu al-rukub wa-nzu ʿala al-khayl nazwan*. The first imperative presumably means to ride without stirrups, or at least to undergo more rigorous horsemanship training without stirrups (see Ibn Hajar 2011: VII, 143).
137 Ibn Abi Shayba 2010: XVII, 496.
138 One version of this style of hadith recorded in al-Mawsili's *Kitab al-Zuhd* reads: ''Umar's letter to ʿUtba b. Farqad included the following: 'Wear cloth wraps, wear sandals, cast off your trousers and ride without stirrups: ride bareback! Shoot target practice! You must be Maʿadd-like (*al-Maʿadiyya*) [or Arab (*al-ʿarabiyya*)]. Beware of luxury and the clothes of the ʿAjam!' (al-Mawsili 1999: 290). The narrator imposed the word 'Arab', as such was the image of typical Arab ways in Abbasid period, but it is key to note that all the other hadith of this genre make no reference to Arabness: in the Umayyad-era context of the hadith's genesis, Maʿadd was not yet an obsolete form of communal identitification.
139 Boym 2001: 42–8.
140 Al-Mawsili 1999: 288–91.
141 The decling returns on conquest and the negative fiscal ramifications for the Caliphate during Hisham's reign is elaborated as the central thesis of Blankinship 1994.

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CHAPTER FIVE

UMAYYAD VISUAL CULTURE AND ITS MODELS[1]

Katharina Meinecke

A characteristic of Umayyad visual culture is the appropriation of iconographic motifs from different cultural origins that are eclectically combined to create new images.[2] Syria-Palestine, the heartland of the Umayyad caliphate, was firmly rooted in the Hellenistic tradition and continued to be so even after the Muslim conquests. Therefore, most of the appropriated iconographic motifs in Umayyad visual culture originate from the Greco-Roman-Byzantine realm. While many of them are attested in pre-Islamic Syria-Palestine, some show characteristics from other formerly Byzantine regions of the caliphate, especially late antique Egypt.[3] Hellenistic iconographies are juxtaposed, and often merged, with carefully chosen elements from the former Sasanian realm, which had seldom been employed in the region in pre-Islamic times. To what extent, if any, other regions of the caliphate, such as Central Asia or South Arabia, influenced Umayyad visual culture has often been discussed, but remains uncertain.[4] Eclectic compositions of this kind are characteristic of the abundant figural decorations and geometrical ornaments in stone, stucco, wood, fresco, and mosaic, which are found mostly in mosques and large multi-functional residential structures, the so-called 'desert castles' or *qusur* (sing. *qasr*) in Syria-Palestine. Many of them were built – as far as we can prove from the extant examples – by caliphal and princely patrons; these monuments thus attest an elite culture in the region.[5]

The political framework after the Muslim conquests facilitated the dissemination of iconographies throughout the Umayyad Empire. Previously Roman-Byzantine territories, from the Iberian Peninsula to Egypt and the Middle East, and the former Sasanian Empire, from Iraq to western Central Asia, were united under one rule. The buildings and monuments of the conquered territories were visible to any visitor or passer-by. Knowledge of these monuments and the images with which they were adorned may also have been disseminated through sketches or descriptions – the iconography thus becoming available throughout the Umayyad Empire. Furthermore, portable objects could now be moved more easily within the caliphate. In particular, the Sasanian king's treasures and workshops, and their iconographic repertoire, were now under Umayyad control and so could be transferred to Syria-Palestine. In addition, papyri from Aphrodito in Egypt and inscriptions from the quarry at Kamid al-Lawz near ʿAnjar in modern Lebanon attest to a certain mobility of laborers within the Umayyad Empire, although there is no specific evidence for these construction

workers having an influence on the design of the architectural decoration or other media of visual culture.[6]

This chapter focuses on the possible models of Umayyad visual culture and their origin and gives an overview of different sources for iconographic motifs in the Umayyad world. While, on the one hand, the origin of some iconographic motifs is rather obvious, in other cases there is a certain ambiguity in determining where a motif's possible models came from. The reason for this ambiguity is the largely underestimated extent to which much visual culture in the late antique Mediterranean and Middle East was shared across the whole region and beyond – a veritable 'visual *koine*' of Late Antiquity, with its various local and regional variations. The new connections across the region under Umayyad rule accelerated and modified this existing trans-regional *koine* of late antique visual culture.

In the first part of the chapter, portable objects, such as silver plate and textiles, as well as monuments on the territory of the caliphate, especially Sasanian rock reliefs and Byzantine mosaics, are discussed as a means of transfer for the appropriated iconographies. It will be proposed that illuminated manuscripts may have been an especially potent and often underestimated medium for the transmission. In the second part of the chapter, the ambiguity of Late Antiquity's shared visual culture is illustrated through the example of geometrical compositions in stucco, which at first sight seem reminiscent of Sasanian architectural decoration, but whose origin in fact is much less certain. In the following, 'iconographic motif' is used to refer to a single iconographic element in an image that may be larger, consisting of several elements; in contrast, 'image' refers to a complete scene or ornamental panel.

PORTABLE OBJECTS AND MONUMENTS AS MODELS

Objects that were easily transportable due to their small size and weight seem to have had a certain influence on the transfer of iconographies in Umayyad visual culture. They seem particularly important in the transmission of iconographic motifs of Sasanian origin. In the following examples, it is not suggested that the exact artefacts discussed were the models used by Umayyad patrons and artisans, but that objects such as these may have circulated and that the modes of transfer for iconographic motifs may have been comparable to the ones proposed here.

Among the images that are without doubt derived from Sasanian models is the almost life-size stucco figure from the façade of the palace of Qasr al-Hayr al-Gharbi, near Palmyra in the Syrian Desert (Figure 5.1). The figure has been interpreted as the caliph Hisham (r. 724–43), who most likely built the structure around 727 according to an inscription on the portal of the nearby khan.[7] The bearded figure is depicted in frontal view, with the legs, in profile, bent outward at the knees while the feet and calves are joined. It is dressed in a tunic-like garment over baggy Persian pants with tight ankles. The presumed caliph is wearing an earring, and on his head is a diadem with wings and a central diamond-shaped element which may be a crenellation.

The figure's garments, jewelry, and posture are reminiscent of depictions of the Sasanian king of kings on his throne, as they are found on a series of silver and rock crystal vessels (Figure 5.2). Of the several plates and bowls depicting this motif, only the famous 'Khosro Cup' in Paris and a silver plate in St. Petersburg were probably manufactured in the Sasanian period in the sixth and seventh centuries, while the other

Figure 5.1 'Sasanian Caliph' from the palace of Qasr al-Hayr al-Gharbi, Damascus, National Museum. Marilyn Jenkins-Madina Archive, courtesy of Aga Khan Documentation Center, MIT Libraries (AKDC@MIT).

pieces seem to be of post-Sasanian date.[8] They all show the Sasanian king sitting on a *kline*-like throne in the same posture as the stucco figure with the knees bent outward. However, the sword positioned between the feet of the Sasanian images is missing on the Syrian relief. The same image of the enthroned king is also depicted on three rock reliefs in Iran, in Naqsh-i Bahram, Naqsh-i Rostam, and Bishapur, which are clearly of Sasanian manufacture and can be dated to the third and fourth centuries.[9] The silhouette of the assistant figures flanking the fire altar on the reverse of the standard Sasanian coins is also very similar to the stucco figure from Qasr al-Hayr al-Gharbi. In contrast to the enthroned king on the silver vessels and rock reliefs, these assistants, which can be interpreted as portraits of the king because of their crowns, are standing instead of sitting, and instead of a sword, they are leaning on bundles of barsom twigs.[10] Since it is not clear if the stucco figure from Qasr al-Hayr is sitting or standing, any of these images on precious vessels, rock reliefs, and coins could have served as its models.

The closest parallel for the head of the stucco figure, with parallel strands of hair falling onto the forehead, a short beard, and a creole earring, is another rock

Figure 5.2 Sasanian silver plate from Strelka, St. Petersburg, The State Hermitage Museum (Inv. S-250). © The State Hermitage Museum. Photo by Alexander Lavrentyev.

relief: the Sasanian king in the investiture scene on the back wall of the Great Ayvan of Taq-i Bostan, who can probably be identified as Khosro II (r. 591–628).[11] As in Khosro's portrait, the stucco caliph's coiffure might have originally consisted of voluminous locks falling onto his shoulders, since the bottom part of the hair is chipped off. The diadem with the pair of wings and crenellation can be attributed to Sasanian models as well. Wings were characteristic Sasanian royal insignia and often attached to the king's crown. Each Sasanian king had his own individual crown; the one worn by Bahram IV (r. 388–99) on his coins is most similar to the diadem at Qasr al-Hayr al-Gharbi.[12]

It is also worth considering illuminated manuscripts as possible models in the transmission of this image. Al-Masʿudi (d. *c.* 956) reports that a 'Picture Book of the Sasanian Kings' was translated from Persian into Arabic in 731 for Hisham.[13] It included portraits of 27 Sasanian sovereigns, shown either standing at war or sitting on the throne, with their individual crowns and garments. The portraits of the enthroned sovereigns may have resembled the enthroned Sasanian kings on the rock reliefs and silver vessels discussed above.

The floor fresco from one of Qasr al-Hayr al-Gharbi's staircases, showing a young man on horseback hunting gazelles, is another image derived from Sasanian models, as they are found on silver plate (Figure 5.3).[14] The rider and his horse are represented in exactly the same pose as the 'royal hunter' – the Sasanian king hunting game – found on numerous Sasanian silver dishes (Figure 5.4).[15] Although the model for the fresco in the Syrian Desert is clearly discernable, the original image has been

Figure 5.3 Floor fresco with a young hunter from Qasr al-Hayr al-Gharbi. Manar al-Athar. Photo by Sean Leatherbury.

Figure 5.4 Silver plate showing the hunt of the Sasanian king Peroz or Kavad I, New York, Metropolitan Museum (Fletcher Fund 1934, Acc. n. 34.33). Metropolitan Museum, www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/322973.

changed: the royal insignia, especially the winged crown and beard, which the stucco figure from the same palace's façade is wearing, are carefully omitted in the fresco. While the stucco figure on the façade was thus perhaps meant to portray the caliph, this young rider may not represent a member of the caliph's family. This selective

omission demonstrates that the Umayyad patrons understood the significance of the royal insignia in the images they appropriated.

Apart from silver vessels, textiles of Sasanian origin and their imitations seem to have been significant for the dissemination of iconographic motifs in Late Antiquity.[16] In the Umayyad *qusur*, textile models are especially apparent for medallions enclosing a *senmurv* – a mythological creature, half dog, half peacock, which was associated with the Iranian concept of *xwarrah* or 'royal glory'.[17] This motif is attested in a wall painting at Khirbat al-Mafjar near Jericho in Palestine, at Hallabat in Jordan, and, again, at Qasr al-Hayr al-Gharbi.[18] In Sasanian art, the *senmurv* is found at least from the sixth to seventh centuries onwards. However, it was not depicted in the visual culture of Syria-Palestine before the Umayyad period.[19] At Hallabat and Khirbat al-Mafjar, the medallions are arranged in rows as a repetitive pattern. At Khirbat al-Mafjar, the medallions are interconnected. They are created by intertwined bands decorated with a frieze of hearts, a typical Sasanian ornament[20] (Figure 5.5). At Hallabat, this does not seem to have been the case. At Qasr al-Hayr al-Gharbi, in contrast, there were only isolated large medallions. These were set on to a white background over a basis imitating a marble incrustation. The 'medallion style'[21] is characteristic of Sasanian silk textiles which were imitated in the Byzantine Empire, China, Central Asia, and elsewhere.[22] The garment decorated with medallions enclosing *senmurvs* which the armored royal horseman in the Great Ayvan at Taq-i Bostan (late sixth or early seventh century) is wearing serves as visual evidence for these textiles at

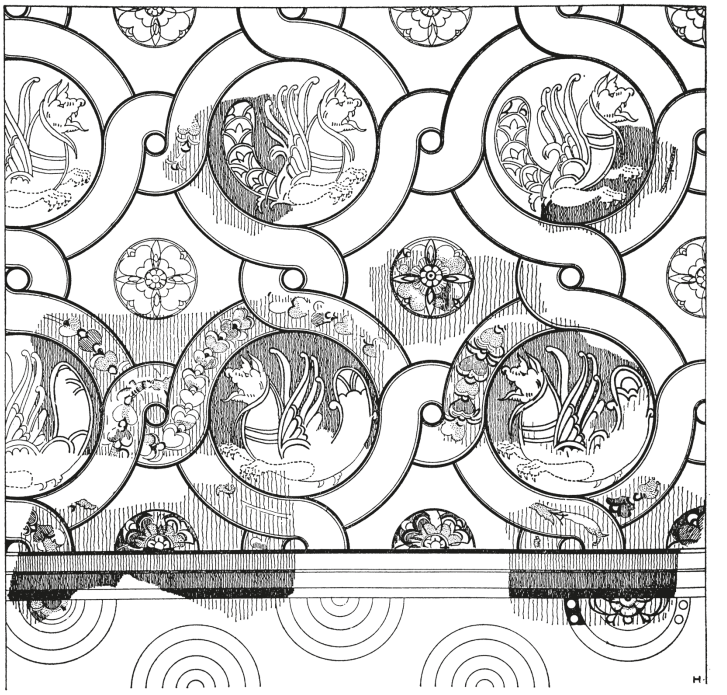

Figure 5.5 Drawing of the wall painting with senmurvs in Khirbat al-Mafjar. Hamilton 1959: 298, fig. 253.

the Sasanian court (Figure 5.6).[23] In addition, a great number of actual textiles with this pattern have survived, though most are not of Sasanian manufacture and probably are of post-Sasanian date, as silk production continued almost unaltered after the Muslim conquests.[24]

Silk textiles and silver vessels were luxury items which were not available to everyone. Both were frequently used in diplomatic gift exchange between empires in Late Antiquity and so were found in royal treasuries.[25] Such objects may thus have been presented to the Muslim conquerors as gifts in diplomatic negotiations in the course of the conquests, or they may have been obtained as war booty: for example, according to the Abbasid-era historian al-Tabari (d. 923), the conquerors discovered tents with two sealed baskets full of gold and silver vessels which had been left behind by the fleeing Sasanians during the conquest of Ctesiphon in 637.[26] By this method or by other routes Sasanian luxury artefacts will have entered into the possession of the Umayyads who may have appropriated the images they were adorned with as models for their own artwork.

The examples discussed so far demonstrate that in the reuse of images from luxury artefacts, it is possible to trace two steps of cross-cultural appropriation. Following two of James O. Young's categories of cultural appropriation, these two steps can be described as 'object appropriation' and 'motif appropriation'.[27] First, an object was transferred from members of one culture to another culture in an 'object appropriation' – for example as a diplomatic gift or as war booty. Second, the ornaments and images with which these luxury artefacts were adorned were copied in a 'motif appropriation' that did not necessarily include an appropriation of the relevant

Figure 5.6 Detail of the royal horseman's kaftan in the Great Ayvan at Taq-i Bustan. Photo by K. Meinecke.

model's style. The appropriated objects could be linked to legends of the events through which they were acquired. This is frequently the case in post-Umayyad literature describing objects obtained during the conquests which may in some cases derive from Umayyad-era traditions.[28] Thus, the objects were ideologically charged, and the same prestigious connotation could then be transferred to the iconographic motifs appropriated from them. Both artefacts and iconographies became 'indicators of wealth and prestige'[29] that identified the individual wearing the textiles or using the silver vessels as well as the one reusing their iconographies in another context, such as the wall decoration of the 'desert castles', as partaking in the intercultural elite tradition of Late Antiquity.

It is much less easy to trace possible models for Hellenistic iconographic motifs that dominate in Umayyad visual culture. On the one hand, they were spread widely throughout the Roman Empire (and through the later Byzantine Empire). On the other hand, Greco-Roman-Byzantine visual culture has survived to a much larger extent than Sasanian one, making the pool of available artifacts and monuments to examine for such a comparative study significantly broader.

Many of the motifs appropriated in Umayyad art are known from Byzantine mosaics excavated in large numbers in churches and private dwellings in Syria-Palestine. Since the churches were still functioning in the Umayyad period, their mosaic floors were visible to visitors and may have been familiar to the Umayyad patrons and artisans. The examples discussed below are mostly from Qusayr ʿAmra, a small bathhouse in the Transjordanian Desert, which is famous for its lavish wall paintings. These paintings cover all the walls and vaults of the large vestibule, interpreted as an audience hall, and the adjacent, more intimate bathing rooms. According to a recently discovered Arabic inscription, the bathhouse was erected by the heir apparent al-Walid b. Yazid, the later caliph al-Walid II (r. 743–4), during the reign of his uncle Hisham.[30]

The eclectically juxtaposed motifs appropriated from different contexts on the walls and vault of the small changing room at Qusayr ʿAmra are much more revealing for the question of possible models than the much-discussed larger scenes filling entire walls of the vestibule. In the changing room, the niche of the window is decorated with a vine scroll growing in circles which are populated by single animals and human figures (Figure 5.7), a design frequently found in late antique floor mosaics and especially popular in the churches of Syria-Palestine. On the right side, two circles, one on top of the other, contain, in the upper circle, a hunter with a spear moving to the right attacking his prey, and, in the lower circle, the prey itself, a lion walking to the left.[31] On mosaics, the hunter attacking a lion with a spear is a frequent motif which is commonly distributed in two neighboring circles of the populated vine scroll. Close parallels are found in the Church of the Deacon Thomas in ʿUyun Musa (Figure 5.8), the Chapel of the Martyr Theodor in Madaba, or the Chapel of Khirbat al-Kursi in Amman, all in fairly close proximity to the bathhouse.[32]

The same motif of the hunter is also attested in the relief decoration on the façade of the late-Umayyad 'desert castle' of Mshatta near Amman, erected by an anonymous patron in the mid-eighth century (Figure 5.9). At Mshatta, as on the mosaics, the motif of the hunter and his prey is distributed in two adjacent circles of the vine scroll relief decoration which covers the façade. In comparison to its models, the image has been altered, though: instead of attacking the lion, the hunter is holding the spear in

Figure 5.7 Window niche in the changing room at Qusayr ʿAmra; the hunter and the lion are on the right. Photo by K. Meinecke.

Figure 5.8 Detail of the mosaic in the Church of the Deacon Thomas in ʿUyun Musa. Piccirillo 1993: 180, fig. 253 [detail]. Courtesy of the Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land, Mt. Nebo, and the American Center of Oriental Research, Amman.

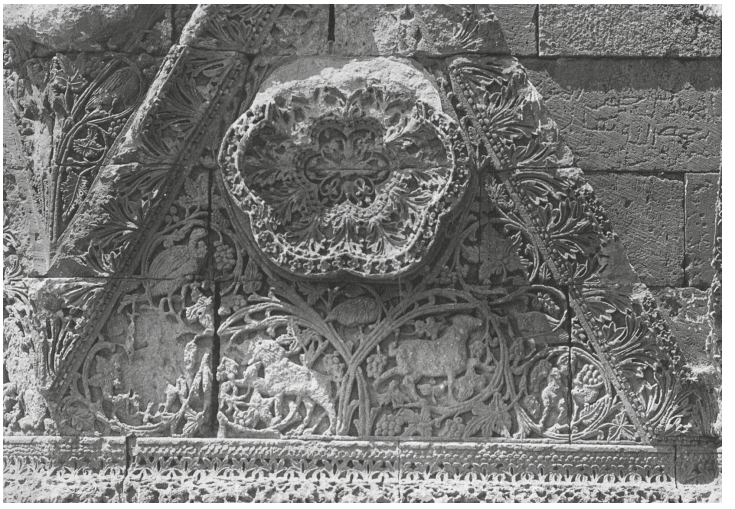

Figure 5.9 Detail of the Mshatta façade; the hunter and lion are on the left. Photo Museum of Islamic Art, Berlin, Photo Archive, negative-n. 7421 (detail). Photo probably by G. Schumacher.

Figure 5.10 Detail of the painted decoration in the vault of the changing room at Qusayr ʿAmra; the mongoose and the cobra are in the two half lozenges, the doe scratching itself is in the lozenge to the right above the cobra. Photo by K. Meinecke.

an upright position, resting it on the vine tendril below his feet. The attack is thus changed into a peaceful scene.[33] Like the young hunter on the floor fresco from Qasr al-Hayr al-Gharbi, at Mshatta, the iconographic motif was deliberately altered to change its meaning.

Other motifs that find their closest parallels on mosaics are depicted in the spaces of the grid pattern covering the vault of the small changing room. In two adjacent semi-lozenges at the rim of the pattern, two animals confronting each other can be interpreted as mongoose and cobra (Figure 5.10).[34] This animal fight is attested both in visual and literary Greco-Roman-Byzantine sources. In the Physiologus (second half of the second century CE), which was very popular in Late Antiquity, this animal fight

became an allegory for the battle of Christ against Satan – of good versus evil.[35] On mosaics, this animal group is found without great changes from the Hellenistic period to the sixth century, first in Nilotic scenes,[36] then among the animals surrounding the mythical musician Orpheus, in the peaceful kingdom of Isaiah,[37] or in populated vine scrolls. The latter is attested in the churches of Qabr Hiram and Zahrani in modern Lebanon (sixth century), where the two opponents – like the hunter and the lion – are distributed in two adjacent circles.[38] In Qusayr ʿAmra, the distribution of the motif in two adjacent spaces is comparable, and the mongoose's posture is very similar to its equivalent on the mosaic in Qabr Hiram. The closest parallels for the cobra are found in North Africa, though, on two Orpheus mosaics from Tina (second half of the third century CE) and Saqiyat al-Zit (early fourth century CE).[39]

Other animals depicted in the painted vault of Qusayr ʿAmra's changing room also have Byzantine inspiration. The doe and the antelope scratching their ear with their hind leg (Figure 5.10) find no immediate parallels on mosaics in Syria-Palestine, but an antelope scratching itself is depicted on the floor mosaic of the Justinianic Central Basilica at Cyrene.[40] This motif is also attested in illuminated manuscripts, in the miniatures of the Rabbula Gospels, which were probably painted in the sixth century, possibly in Syria, and in a later illustration of Kosmas Indikopleustes in Saint Catherine's Monastery on the Sinai from the eleventh century.[41]

That the cobra as it is depicted in Qusayr ʿAmra and the scratching deer motif are not attested in Syria-Palestine before the Umayyad period may be a coincidence of the archaeological record. However, the similarities to mosaics elsewhere and to manuscript illuminations raise the question of whether some of the appropriated iconographic motifs could also have been transferred through pattern books or illuminated manuscripts. Hana Taragan traced the possible origin in book illuminations for another motif at Qusayr ʿAmra, that of two carpenters sawing a plank on a scaffold, which is depicted in a fresco of different craftsmen in the vault of the audience hall. She identified the group in an illumination of the Quedlinburg *Itala* fragment (early fifth century) showing Solomon's construction of the Temple.[42] Another example of a motif which may have been appropriated through illuminated manuscripts is the enthroned personage in the central niche of Qusayr ʿAmra's audience hall which has been interpreted either as the caliph Hisham or as his heir apparent al-Walid b. Yazid. One of its closest parallels is the image of the enthroned king Solomon in the Rabbula Gospels.[43] In addition, the 'Picture Book of the Sasanian Kings' discussed earlier is also evidence of a manuscript that circulated in the Umayyad Empire and whose illustrations may have served as models for newly created Umayyad images. This and the other examples indicate that illuminated manuscripts should be taken into greater consideration as possible modes of transfer for iconographic motifs in Umayyad visual culture. Like the silver vessels and textiles, they could easily be transported over large distances.

Among the pre-Islamic monuments preserved and visible on the territory of the Umayyad Empire, figural and architectural sculpture from Palmyra can also be identified as models for Umayyad visual culture. A fragmentarily preserved group of two figures – one reclining, the other, clearly a woman, sitting at her partner's feet – from the façade of Qasr al-Hayr al-Gharbi is obviously derived from Palmyrene funerary reliefs or sarcophagus lids depicting the tomb owner reclining on a couch during a banquet.[44] Banquet scenes are frequent in Greco-Roman visual tradition, yet the

posture and position of the sitting woman are characteristic of Palmyrene sculpture revealing the group's models. Since Palmyra continued to be inhabited in Umayyad times and was even embellished with new residential buildings, a market, and a mosque, its pre-Islamic monuments remained visible and were thus familiar to the contemporaries.[45]

Another way to transfer iconographies was through *spolia*, transported from one site on the Umayyad territory to another, similar to the luxury artefacts and illuminated manuscripts which by contrast may have come from outside the Empire as well. *Spolia* are attested in great number in the newly erected mosques and *qusur* throughout Umayyad Syria-Palestine.[46] An example for this mode of transfer is found in Qasr al-Hayr al-Gharbi where a Roman doorframe was integrated into the palace's façade which was otherwise covered with stucco reliefs (Figure 5.13). This doorframe from the early third century CE, made of the characteristic Palmyrene limestone, most likely originally belonged to a temple tomb in Palmyra. It is decorated with a vegetal frieze consisting of superimposed denticulated leaves and flowers, while on the inside, it is adorned with a medallion scroll made up of grape vines that are populated by different birds and lizards (Figure 5.11).[47] Inside the palace, the stucco arch above one of the windows also depicts a medallion scroll consisting of grape vines which are populated by exactly the same animals as on the doorframe on the façade, birds with long necks and lizards (Figure 5.12).[48] The *spolium* on the façade thus served as a model for the newly produced architectural decoration in a different material inside the palace. In this case, the two-step process of object appropriation followed by motif appropriation, as observed above for the portable objects, is especially obvious.

The Palmyrene monuments and *spolia* were perhaps recognized as relics of the legendary 'Arab' kingdom of Palmyra and were thus ideologically charged like the portable objects. By appropriating building material and iconographic motifs from Palmyra, the Umayyads could appropriate this history on their territory, make it their own, and continue it.

CONTESTED ORIGINS: GEOMETRICAL ORNAMENTS

A characteristic of Umayyad architecture is the extensive stucco decoration covering the façades and internal walls of some of the 'desert castles'. Especially noteworthy are the panels with geometrical ornaments which are applied to the flat surface of the walls, as in the bathhouse of Khirbat al-Mafjar, on the façade of the porch and the internal walls, as well as at Qasr al-Hayr al-Gharbi, on the façade of the palace (Figure 5.13).[49]

This kind of decoration is reminiscent of Sasanian architectural sculpture, one of the characteristics of which is the use of stucco wall panels with repetitive, often geometrical ornaments. However, it is much more difficult to ascribe possible models to Umayyad geometrical stucco decoration than it seems at first. In contrast to the Sasanian wall panels, the Umayyad stucco carvings show a greater variety of decorative motifs. In addition, while their Sasanian counterparts are very often molded, Umayyad stucco is generally freely carved, making it rather unlikely that it was manufactured by artisans from the former Sasanian realm.[50] Further, both the patterns and the distribution of geometrical ornaments on a flat wall surface are not

Figure 5.11 Detail of the populated vine scroll on the reused Palmyrene door frame at Qasr al-Hayr al-Gharbi, Damascus, National Museum. Photo by K. Meinecke.

an exclusively Sasanian phenomenon, as exemplified by the pattern of the swastika meander.

The swastika meander pattern consists of several rows of interconnected swastikas placed on edge, alternating with square spaces which are often filled with rosettes. It is attested three times in the stucco decoration of Khirbat al-Mafjar, on a wall panel in the palace's entrance hall (Figure 5.14), on the façade of the bathhouse porch, and on a balustrade panel from the palace, where it is slightly elongated, so that the spaces are rather lozenges than squares, alternatingly filled either with a four-lobed rosette or a stylized flower with six pointed leaves.[51] Another example was found at Qasr al-Hayr al-Gharbi, on one panel of a latticework balustrade from the interior façade of the palace (Figure 5.15).[52] For Robert W. Hamilton, the excavator of Khirbat al-Mafjar, this motif was a 'stock pattern from the everyday repertoire of plasterers in ʿIraq',[53] and there actually are attestations of this pattern in Sasanian stuccowork. A fragmentary stucco wall panel from the sixth century with the same pattern as in the 'desert castles', a swastika meander alternating with square spaces,

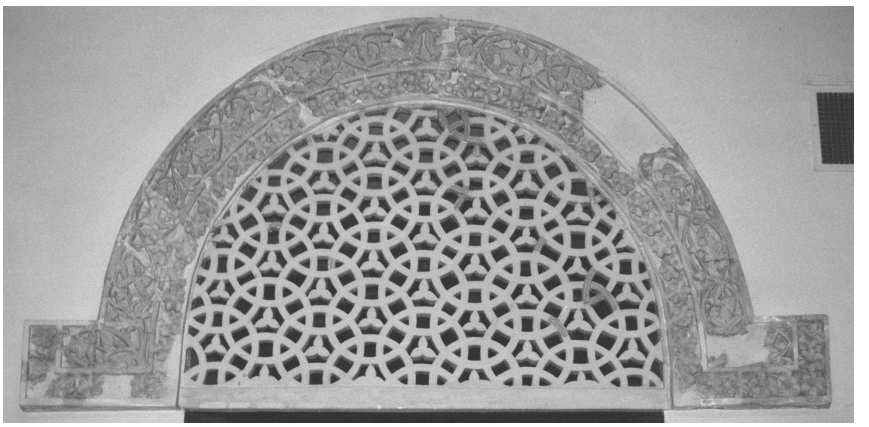

Figure 5.12 Stucco window arch from the palace at Qasr al-Hayr al-Gharbi. Marilyn Jenkins-Madina Archive, courtesy of Aga Khan Documentation Center, MIT Libraries (AKDC@MIT).

either filled with a rosette or with a lily-shaped leaf, was found in Umm al-Zaʿatir near Ctesiphon (Figure 5.16).[54]

However, the swastika meander was not an exclusively Sasanian ornament, as abundant examples of this pattern from Roman-Byzantine tradition reveal. Frequently, it is attested in late antique Egypt, both in stone friezes and on textiles. On frieze panels made of local Egyptian limestone, dated to the fifth or sixth century, the meander is enclosed in between two thin undecorated bands, creating the impression as if it were cut out of a larger repetitive pattern (Figure 5.17).[55] On textiles, the swastika meander with inserted spaces was used as a filling for decorative medallions and squares in ornamental trimmings on tunics and domestic textiles from the third century CE onward (Figure 5.18).[56]

One need not look as far as Egypt, though, to find close parallels for the meander pattern. On a mosaic from the cathedral of Hama in Syria, dated to 412, the swastika meander with inserted and, in this case, undecorated squares frames a Nilotic scene.[57] In the Church of the Lions in Umm al-Rasas near Madaba in modern Jordan, in close vicinity to the 'desert castles', an ambo constructed of several panels with geometrical decoration was excavated. The oil shale slabs were probably produced locally in the late sixth century. One of them is decorated with the same swastika meander pattern – the square spaces filled either with a stylized flower in the same shape as on the Egyptian friezes or with a lily-like leaf as on the Sasanian stucco panel (Figure 5.19).[58] Both the slabs in Umm al-Rasas and the late antique Egyptian architectural decoration reflect Constantinopolitan chancel screens and parapets which were exported to churches around the Christian world, among them many decorated with latticework.[59]

Hamilton, who studied the stucco work of Khirbat al-Mafjar, concluded that a large proportion of the patterns employed in the palace's and bathhouse's decoration reflects a '"*koine*" of ornaments, ultimately Hellenistic in origin'.[60] This *koine* had developed through constant intercultural 'de- and recontextualization'[61] of images, as

Figure 5.13 Façade of the palace of Qasr al-Hayr al-Gharbi, reconstruction in Damascus, National Museum. Photo by K. Meinecke.

Gunnar Brands and Matthew P. Canepa have more recently demonstrated in regard to the entangled visual cultures of Persia and the Hellenistic world[62] – a concept that can easily be extended to include other late antique empires.[63] For iconographic motifs that are attested both in the Greco-Roman-Byzantine and the Sasanian realm, without significant alterations in iconographic details or style, this constant 'de- and recontextualization' thus makes it impossible to determine their origin, as is especially evident for the geometrical patterns.

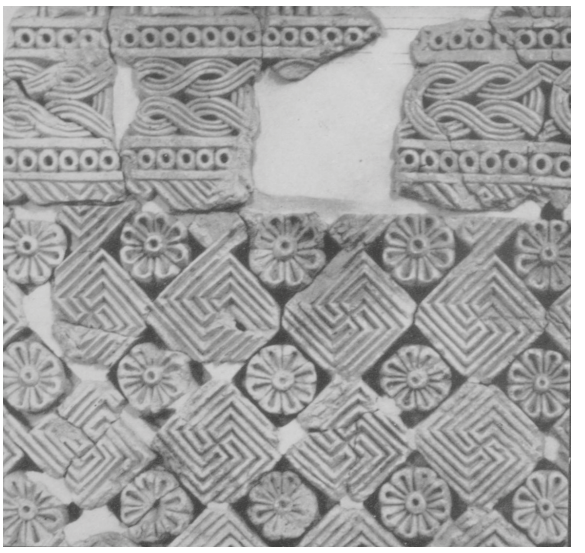

Figure 5.14 Stucco wall panel from the palace entrance hall at Khirbat al-Mafjar. Hamilton 1959: pl. 34,2.

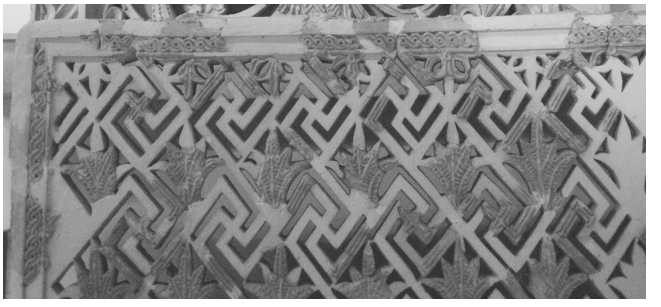

Figure 5.15 Stucco balustrade from Qasr al-Hayr al-Gharbi, Damascus, National Museum. Photo by K. Meinecke.

The examples have already shown that although covering the external façades with extensive reliefs in stucco or in stone may have been a new development in the Umayyad period, filling spaces with geometrical ornaments was not. Even the distribution of geometrical panels on flat surfaces – like the meander pattern itself – was not limited to Sasanian models. A region where this kind of decoration was especially popular was late antique Egypt, a center of artistic production in Late Antiquity. In late antique Egyptian church and tomb architecture, ornamental panels like the ones discussed above ran along the flat surface of the walls as horizontal friezes, covered archivolts, or were vertically set into the walls to frame the columns of niches, as in the South Church of Bawit.[64] Geometrical ornaments also filled the spaces in between *aediculae* or covered columns, as is attested in the painted decoration of the Dayr Anba Bishay, the 'Red Monastery', near Sohag from the late fifth to early seventh

Figure 5.16 Stucco panel from Umm al-Zaʿatir, New York, Metropolitan Museum, Rogers Fund, 1932, Acc. n. 32.150.47.
Photo Metropolitan Museum, https://images.metmuseum.org/CRDImages/an/original/DP348723.jpg.

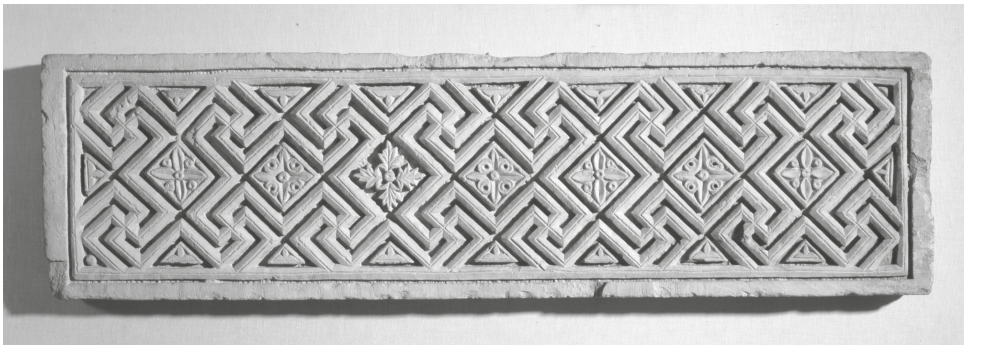

Figure 5.17 Frieze panel probably from Bawit, sixth century CE, Berlin, Skulpturensammlung und Museum für Byzantinische Kunst Inv. 6145.
Photo Skulpturensammlung und Museum für Byzantinische Kunst, SMB, photo by Jürgen Liepe.

century.[65] In addition, repetitious geometrical ornaments could cover flat spaces such as the lunettes above doors, creating a monotonous, abstract, and distinctly non-architectural impression. An example is the tympanum from the South Church at Bawit where a pattern consisting of octagons and crosses fills the entire lunette, sparing only a small semi-circular field with a figural image at the center.[66]

The same tendencies can also be observed in late antique Northern Syria. On the lintel of the fifth-century church in Baqirha, for example, further relief decoration is distributed directly above the actual doorframe (Figure 5.20): a geometrical ornament created by interlaced bands with rosettes in octagonal spaces, very similar in its compositional principles to the swastika meander discussed previously and reminiscent of Byzantine chancel screens, is juxtaposed with three decorative medallions, defying any Classical Hellenistic conventions for the distribution of architectural ornaments.[67] While in Greco-Roman architecture the decoration was mostly limited

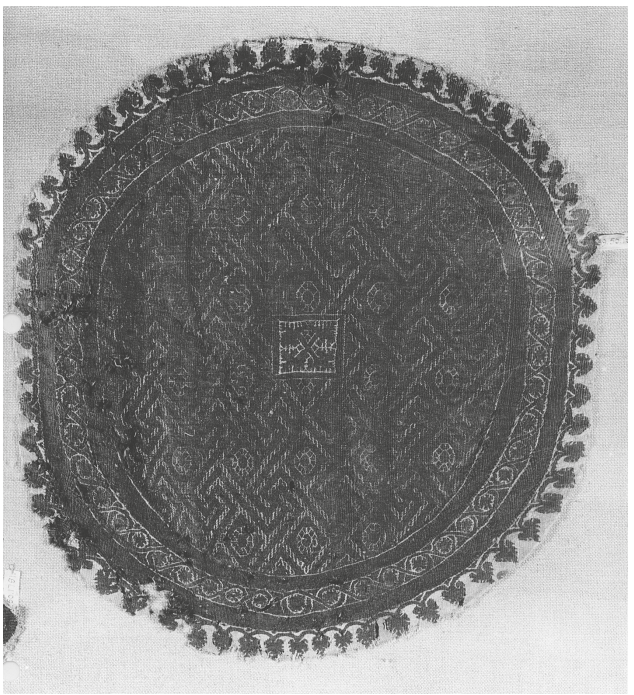

Figure 5.18 Decorative textile roundel, attributed to Egypt, 4th–5th century, New York, Metropolitan Museum, Rogers Fund 1909, Acc. n. 09.50.1830. Photo by Metropolitan Museum, https://images.metmuseum.org/CRDImages/is/original/87661.jpg.

to the load-bearing members, such as capitals, pilasters and friezes, doorframes and niches, in Late Antiquity this Classical syntax of architectural decoration was increasingly dissolved. The patchwork-like distribution of panels with different geometrical patterns can also be observed on late antique mosaics in churches in Syria-Palestine, for example in the Church of Khalda in modern Lebanon from the mid-fifth century or in the Theotokos Chapel on Mount Nebo, constructed in the early seventh century.[68] Among the geometrical ornaments in the patchwork panels are various types of swastika meanders, their square spaces filled with fruits or birds. Ultimately, the uniform geometrical decoration of the Constantinopolitan chancel screens and parapets, as well as the decorative textile squares and roundels with geometrical fillings from Egypt, too, are evidence for the phenomenon of covering flat surfaces with ornaments. As such, they can be compared to the geometrical panels of Umayyad stucco decoration on the façades of the 'desert castles'. Especially for the balustrades at Qasr al-Hayr al-Gharbi and Khirbat al-Mafjar, the widespread Byzantine church furnishings could have served as models. The textiles, too, which, as observed above, were an easy means of iconographic transfer, could have been a source for the patterns in the 'desert castles'.

All the examples discussed in this section reflect a change in the conception of (wall) surfaces and the distribution of ornament which already began to develop in pre-Islamic times and in different regions of the later Umayyad Empire, not just in the Sasanian realm, but also in the Byzantine territories. For the wall decoration with

Figure 5.19 Drawing of the ambo parapet from the Church of the Lions at Umm al-Rasas. Piccirillo 1992: 209, fig. 6,5. Courtesy of the Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land, Mt. Nebo.

geometrical panels in the Umayyad *qusur*, the inspiration and the immediate models might well have come from Egypt, where this kind of decoration was especially popular, and not necessarily from the former Sasanian territories. Even a model from Syria-Palestine, the heartland of the Umayyad Empire, or directly from Byzantium seems possible. The increased use of geometrical ornaments to cover surfaces was a late antique trend that spread far beyond the Sasanian and later Umayyad territories. In addition, the wide dissemination of designs makes it impossible to determine the origin of the models used for the patterns appropriated by the Umayyads. This ambiguity was probably not a concern of the contemporaries, though. For the patrons of the time, it was more important to partake in the '"*koine*" of ornaments' which had developed over many centuries through cross-cultural interaction between the different, then still separate empires.[69]

APPROPRIATION PROCESSES AND LATE ANTIQUITY'S VISUAL *KOINE*

The transfer of iconographies can be understood as a two-step process with, first, an object appropriation and then a motif appropriation in the course of which artifacts and iconographies were ideologically charged. Apart from luxury objects such as

Figure 5.20 Doorframe of the 5th-century church in Baqirha. Photo by K. Meinecke.

silver vessels and silk textiles, illuminated manuscripts, though preserved only in small numbers and thus not often available for comparisons, will have provided another way to transfer iconographies in the Umayyad realm and beyond. Thus, material and visual culture were intertwined. However, while the models for some Umayyad images are fairly obvious, even if we cannot name the exact artefact that inspired Umayyad patrons and designers (if such existed), in other cases it is much more difficult to identify a possible model or even the geographic origin of an iconographic motif. Determining the kind of models, their origins and especially the alterations of their iconography in a new context reveals a lot of information on the patron's ambitions – a topic which cannot be elaborated in this short chapter. In many cases, though, instead of searching for the possible models, it would be more fruitful to look out for objects and images that circulated and the ideas associated with them in different regions of the late antique world.

Of course, the world of Late Antiquity was interconnected beyond the Byzantine eastern Mediterranean and the Sasanian lands, which have been the focus of this chapter. A large variety of iconographies were available and were shaped through intercultural exchange, which was not a new development in the Umayyad period, but had gone on for centuries before. Artifacts, iconographies, and the principles of their distribution on the walls of the mosques and *qusur* were part of the 'visual *koine*' of Late Antiquity, with all its regional variations. The Umayyads, too, strived to be part of it and continuously developed both the iconographies and design principles,

adapting them to their demands. When pre-Islamic iconographies adorned newly produced objects which then themselves entered into the intercultural transfer process as gifts, war booty, or simply commodities, they too contributed to the development of this shared visual culture. This complexity and ambiguity reveals the importance of considering the interconnected development of iconographies when studying the formation of Umayyad art and thus imagining a much broader range of possible origins for the appropriated models.

NOTES

1 I wish to thank Cäcilia Fluck for her comments and generous input, especially on late antique Egyptian architectural sculpture and textiles, as well as the editors for their helpful suggestions.

2 See, for example: Herzfeld 1910; Grabar 1973; Talgam 2004.

3 Creswell 1939; Talgam 2004: 98–109.

4 Talgam 2004: 69–72, 110–17.

5 See also Genequand (2012) on different categories of *qusur* differentiated by typology, size and patron.

6 Aphrodito papyri: Küchler 1991; Morelli 1998. Kamid al-Lawz: Mouterde 1939; Mouterde 1968; Maiberger 1970.

7 Grabar 1964: 84, fig. 20; Schlumberger 1986: 15, pl. 64 a, d; Talgam 2004: 22, 65, fig. 69; Fowden 2004: 121, fig. 39. On the dating of Qasr al-Hayr al-Gharbi see: Schlumberger 1986: 16–17.

8 Silver plates and other vessels showing this motif, both Sasanian and post-Sasanian: Harper 1979: 58–62; Harper and Meyers 1981: 116–20. 'Khosro Cup' in Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale: Harper 1979: 49–50, 57–8, pl. III; Harper and Meyers 1981: 100, 111–12, 115; Wood 2017. Silver plate from Strelka in St. Petersburg, Hermitage Inv. S-250: Harper 1979: 49, 57, pl. II; Harper and Meyers 1981: 100, 110–11, 114–15.

9 Harper 1979: 50–1, pl. VIIa; Harper and Meyers 1981: 102–3; Herrmann 1981: 20–38.

10 Göbl 1968: 18–19, table 11–13, pl. 12–13; Schindel 2004: 88.

11 Tanabe 2003: 2–3 (he identifies the king as Ardashir III, though); Canepa 2013: 871–5.

12 Erdmann 1951: 101–2, 123, fig. 18.

13 Schaeder 1936: 231; Schlumberger 1986: 22.

14 Schlumberger 1946–1948: 88–93, pl. B; Schlumberger 1986: 14, pl. 34; Hillenbrand 2018: 105–6.

15 Harper and Meyers 1981: 40–98, especially pl. 15, 17, 22.

16 Following Brown 1971 and Bowersock et al. 1999, I see the Umayyads as an integral part of Late Antiquity and will discuss them as such in this contribution.

17 Kröger 1999: 201–3; Gierlichs 1993: 26–7; Compareti 2015; *E.Ir.* 'Simorḡ' (H.-P. Schmidt). On the *xwarrah* see: *E.Ir.* 'Farr(ah)' (G. Gnoli). Compareti 2015 argues that the depicted creature is not actually the *senmurv* of Zoroastrian mythology and should thus rather be called 'pseudo-*senmurv*' or 'pseudo-*simurgh*'.

18 Qasr al-Hayr al-Gharbi: Schlumberger 1986: 14, pl. 57b. Khirbat al-Mafjar: Grabar 1959: 297–9, pl. 70, n. 1–6. Hallabat: Arce 2008: 161, 182, fig. 20.

19 Gierlichs 1993: 26–7. See the discussion on the Sasanian *senmurv* by Compareti 2015: 37–8.

20 Kröger 1982: 231.

21 Canepa 2009: 206.

22 Feltham 2010: 19–20.

23 Harper 1978: 123, fig. M; Canepa 2009: 206–7, fig. 40; Compareti 2015: 37, fig. 3.
24 Harper 1978: 136, n. 60 (with literature on further examples); Feltham 2010: 10 (fig. 5), 15, 22.
25 On diplomatic gift exchange, see, for example: Kaplony 1996: 366–7, 377–8); Ibn al-Zubayr 1996; Cutler 2008; Bauer 2009.
26 al-Tabari 1989: 20 (II, 2440); Shalem 1994: 78.
27 Young 2010: 6–7. His book deals with the moral dimensions of appropriation in the contemporary arts, less relevant to the argument of this contribution, and he does not see his categories as steps depending on each other. However, I think his categories are very helpful to describe the processes in the transfer of images in Late Antiquity.
28 Shalem 2005: 115.
29 Canepa 2009: 206.
30 Imbert 2016: 331–6.
31 Qusayr ʿAmra: Vibert-Guigue and Bisheh 2007: pl. 108c. Populated scrolls: Toynbee and Ward Perkins 1950.
32 Piccirillo 1993: 113, fig. 101, 117; 180, fig. 252; 265, fig. 479.
33 Meinecke 2016: 145.
34 Vibert-Guigue and Bisheh 2007: 43, n. V.3, 1–2, pl. 65, 132a, 134.
35 Schönberger 2001: ch. 26; Balty 1976: 231–3; Balty 1995: 224–6.
36 For example, in the Casa del Fauno in Pompeii (late second century BCE): Andreae 2003: 111–19, especially 116 fig. 116/117.
37 Orpheus: Aymard 1959: 236; Balty 1976: 223–6; Balty 1995: 219. Isaiah, for example in the church of Karlık in Cilicia (490/491): Gough 1974; Balty 1995: 220.
38 Qabr Hiram, now in Paris, Louvre: Aymard 1959: 261 note 4; Balty 1976: 227, fig. 5; Balty 1995: 220. Zahrani: Chéhab 1957: 95, pl. 50; Balty 1976: 228, fig. 6–7; Balty 1995: 221.
39 Both mosaics are in the museum of Sfax: Aymard 1959: 236, 254, pl. 1; Balty 1976: 224–5 fig. 2; Balty 1995: 218.
40 Vibert-Guigue and Bisheh 2007: 43 n. V.3, 5 and 14, pl. 65, 134. For the comparison in Cyrene see: Alföldi-Rosenbaum and Ward-Perkins 1980: 116, pl. 48,2, 53,2. The only iconographic motif in Syria-Palestine which may be related to the deer scratching itself is, to my knowledge, the strange motif of a deer with one head and three bodies, one of which has a raised hind leg, on a mosaic excavated in Sawran near Hama; see Zaqzuq 1995: 240–2, fig. 35.
41 Rabbula Gospels in Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, cod. Plut. 1.56, fol. 6r: Bernabò 2008: 92–3, pl. 11; Bernabò 2014. Kosmas Indikopleustes, Cod. 1186, fol. 146r: Manafis 1990: 322, 343, fig. 32.
42 Taragan 2008.
43 Solomon in the Rabbula Gospels: Bernabò 2008: 88–90, pl. 8. Enthroned caliph or heir apparent: Grabar 1964: 84–5, fig. 23; Fowden 2004: 113–41; Vibert-Guigue and Bisheh 2007: 42; Marsham 2018, 13–19.
44 Grabar 1964: 78, fig. 9; Schlumberger 1986: 15, pl. 41, 64b; Meinecke 1996: 143, pl. 6c-d; Talgam 2004: 22–3, 95, fig. 77.
45 Gawlikowski 2008; Genequand 2012: 45–66; Intagliata 2018, 105–7.
46 On Umayyad buildings with *spolia* see Finster 2009; Greenhalgh 2009: 255–325; Guidetti 2016: 97–157.
47 Schlumberger 1939: 225–6, pl. 33,2; Finster 2009: 277.
48 Schlumberger 1986: 15–16, pl. 78a, 84a; Écochard and Saliby 1986: 31; Meinecke 1996: 143.
49 Qasr al-Hayr al-Gharbi: Schlumberger 1986. Khirbat al-Mafjar: Hamilton 1953; Hamilton 1959: 156–293.

50 On Sasanian stucco see: Kröger 1982. Technical and stylistic differences between Sasanian and Umayyad stucco have been observed by Hamilton (1953: 51) and Talgam (2004: 55, 59, 62–4).
51 Palace entrance hall (panel 2): Hamilton 1959: 160–2, fig. 120, pl. 6,3, 34,2. Bath house porch (panel 10): Hamilton 1959: 179, pl. 39,3. Balustrade from the palace (panel 14): Hamilton 1959: 247, fig. 188; 253, pl. 59,1.
52 Écochard and Saliby 1986: 31. Similar parapets are depicted on pl. 69 and 69bis; the actual panel discussed here is exhibited in the National Museum of Damascus, but not published.
53 Hamilton 1959: 161.
54 New York, Metropolitan Museum, Acc. n. 32.150.47: Kröger 1982: 68–9, n. 78; 260–1, pl. 24,1. In general, meanders in different shapes are attested in the Persian realm since Parthian times, see: Kröger 1982: 69.
55 For further examples of the pattern see: Krumeich 2003: I, 113–14; II, 59–60, pl. 96 (from Oxyrhynchos, fifth or sixth century); Atalla n.d.: 108, n. 23789 (in the Coptic Museum in Cairo); Effenberger and Severin 1992: 177, n. 91 (probably from Bawit and dated to the sixth century, Berlin, Skulpturensammlung und Museum für Byzantinische Kunst Inv. 6145).
56 Pattern F-1b in Hodak 2011: II pl. 3 (Zf.-Nr. 33–7), 16 (Zf.-Nr. 235–6), 51 (Zf.-Nr. 765), 68 (Zf.-Nr. 1020), 72 (Zf.-Nr. 1072), 99 (Zf.-Nr. 477), III pl. 3–4.
57 Zaqzuq 1995: 237–8, fig. 1, 5.
58 Piccirillo 1992: 207–11, fig. 6,2 (who already compares the style of the panels with Umayyad stucco); Talgam 2004: 87, fig. 127.
59 On Constantinopolitan influences on late antique Egyptian ornaments see: Krumeich 2003: I 113–14, 123–4; Brenk 1978: 86–7. Swastika meanders are attested in Constantinopolitan architectural sculpture, yet slightly different than the pattern discussed here. The example from the Church of the Holy Apostles in Istanbul, recorded in Ulbert 1969: 29, Nr. 15, lacks the square spaces, and on the parapets from the Hagia Sophia, discussed by Brenk (1978: 85–7, pl. 1–2), the frieze of swastika meanders is arranged in a circle, the spaces thus being triangular instead of square. An example for a latticework screen with the swastika meander arranged in intertwined circles is found in the Hagia Sophia: Brenk 1978: 86, pl. 2a.
60 Hamilton 1953: 49.
61 Brands 2008: 254. On Rome/Byzantium and Persia see also: Canepa 2009.
62 Brands 2008; Canepa 2009.
63 As shown by Canepa 2010.
64 Severin 1977: pl. 37–8; Bénazeth 2002: 23–9, 35, 38–48.
65 Lyster 2016; Bolman 2016: 163.
66 Bénazeth 2002: 46, fig. 36.
67 An inscription on the lintel states the date of the church as 416: Strube 1993: 77–9, pl. 33c.
68 Khalda: Chéhab 1957: 107–16, pl. 62–3. Mount Nebo: Piccirillo 1993: 151, fig. 199. The same principle for the layout of the mosaic is also attested in the Basilica of Moses on Mount Nebo (Piccirillo 1993: 148–9).
69 Brands 2008; Canepa 2009, 2010.

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PART II

SCRIBES, ADMINISTRATION AND LAW

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CHAPTER SIX

ASPECTS OF UMAYYAD ADMINISTRATION[1]

Marie Legendre

INTRODUCTION

Administration can be defined as the state apparatus for the organisation and jurisdiction of resources and people, allowing for the collection and redistribution of state revenue, mainly through the fiscal system. It is maintained by individuals who acquire status and socio-economic capital because of their participation in the administrative enterprise. They contribute to a system aiming for the collection and transfer of revenue between each echelon of the administrative hierarchy, from the local population to different types of elites. However, this system is not simply regulated by top-down dynamics. Administrators, local elites and communities all have opportunities to shape the administrative structures and rules through petitions, non-compliance, or revolts.[2]

Under Umayyad rule, collection of revenue through the fiscal system allowed for the transfer of resources to the main area of state expenditure. As for all premodern states, the most demanding expense was the army, a large part of the ruling elite having a military role. Military, fiscal and legal administration were closely intertwined. Some members of the administrative apparatus provided judicial or legal expertise. Judicial practices were however not the same for all religious communities of the early Islamic period. Possibilities for *forum shopping* across religious communities meant that judicial administration was not necessarily Umayyad, whereas fiscal administration applied to all the subject population. This is why the present chapter will leave judicial administration aside.[3]

Umayyad administration is complex to approach in its entirety. As with many other facets of the history of this period, the source material available is diverse in form and language. Documentary sources often prove the most useful when researching this topic as they are strictly contemporary and many, such as glass-weights, seals, coins and papyrus documents, were produced to serve administrative purposes.[4] They are also the remains of administrative practices in the archaeological record. As such they are the preferred corpus for the present contribution. The nature of the sources is also very different for each region of the Umayyad Empire. The diverse coinage of Iraq finds no parallel in Egypt and the immense corpus of papyri from Egypt has no equivalent in the rest of the Umayyad realm. The rich corpus of Andalusi seals is unmatched in North Africa. Only for Syria, the caliphal centre, do

we find a concentration of diverse types of documentary sources: a rich corpus of coins and seals, inscriptions and some papyri.[5]

Some contemporary literature written in non-Muslim circles can be employed as well. The texts written by the dominant groups were famously composed later. Albrecht Noth has shown convincingly that administrative topics beyond the supposed establishment of the military *diwan* by the second successor to the leadership of the new polity, ʿUmar b. al-Khattab (r. 634–44), and the foundation of new cities for the army (*amsar*) were not among the concerns of the earliest Islamic historical writings. They developed as a secondary theme from the eighth century onwards.[6]

Hence, the following pages will focus on administrative practice as visible in contemporary material more than on administrative theory and interpretations developed in later literature, unless they can be corroborated by contemporary material or studied as a retrospective discourse on Umayyad administrative practices. The topics covered in the following pages were chosen because they are the themes around which the contemporary material converges and because they can be studied in more than one region of the Umayyad realm. The first part of the chapter will look at administrative divisions. The second focuses on fiscal administration and the final one on reforms and the memory of changes in the Umayyad administration. Because of the expertise of the author, a significant part of this discussion is based on information contained in Egyptian papyri, which are also the most detailed contemporary source on Umayyad administrative practices.[7] In this period, this trilingual documentation of Egyptian papyri (Greek, Coptic, Arabic) is dominated by the administrative dossier of the village (*kome*) of Aphrodito, which includes letters sent in Greek and Arabic by the Umayyad governor Qurra b. Sharik (in office 709–714). The *c.* 400 documents dating to the first two decades of the eighth century offer a very detailed snapshot of village administration at the beginning of the Marwanid period, especially at the time of al-Walid b. ʿAbd al-Malik (r. 705–15).[8] Conclusions drawn from the study of this corpus do not however necessarily apply to the other decades of Umayyad history or to other regions of the empire.

ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISIONS AND HIERARCHY

From the early eighth century onwards, the Commander of the Faithful (*amir al-muʾminin*) is presented as the symbolic head of the administrative hierarchy in the documents of Egypt. The collection of the taxes of the province are presented as his 'dues' (*dikaion tou Amiralmoumnin* or *haqq amir al-muʾminin*).[9] In earlier decades of the Umayyad period, clear references to him are scarce in Egyptian papyri.[10] Only one Greek document mentioning the *sarakenoi* of the Commander of the Believers (*Sarakenon tou amira ton piston*), possibly Muʿawiya, bringing instructions to administrators in Upper Egypt can be seen as a reflection of the distant role of the Sufyanid caliph in the administrative hierarchy.

Though he is understandably referred as 'caliph' in secondary literature, Robert Hoyland noted that this title (*khalifa*) only appears in the contemporary administrative documentation of the whole Umayyad period for one caliph, ʿAbd al-Malik b. Marwan (r. 685–705), and solely on a handful of coins.[11] Overwhelmingly, Commander of the Faithful is the most common title given to him in Umayyad

documents of all provenance and languages (coins, seals, papyri, inscriptions, literature).[12] In some inscriptions and coins as well as in papyrus protocols of the eighth century, the epithet *ʿabd allah* ('God's Servant', or 'God's Slave') precedes his name and title.[13]

Appointees of the caliphs bearing the title of *amir* in contemporary sources headed the different regions of the empire, they are commonly referred to as 'governors' in the secondary literature. The term *wali* – which is the title of governors in the later Arabic and Persian literature – is not attested in documentary evidence before the first decade of the Abbasid period.[14] The term *jund* (pl. *ajnad*), which is a word of military origin, emerges in the Abbasid period in reference to the provinces of Syria, Northern Mesopotamia and al-Andalus. However it does not appear in sources securely dated to the Umayyad period.[15] In the contemporary Arabic administrative documents of Egypt and Syria, those regions are simply named the 'land' (*ard*),[16] a term also reflected in later literature describing the administrative geography of the Jazira and Iraq (for example, *ard Mawsil, ard Jukha, ard Kaskar*).[17] In al-Andalus, *ard* is used on lead seals struck at the time of the conquest and connected to peace agreements.[18]

It is a very difficult task to reconstruct the administrative map of the provinces under Umayyad authority especially as the empire kept expanding. In the seventh and early eighth centuries, pre-Islamic provincial systems were progressively recomposed. For a time, two provincial systems, old and new, functioned in parallel as visible in Fars, Syria and Egypt.[19] The new system can be described as follows. In the seventh century, it is uncertain whether the future caliph Muʿawiya b. Abi Sufyan (r. 661–80), ruled four provinces when he became governor of Syria (al-Sham) in 639 – Filastin (capital Caesarea/Qaysariya), al-Urdunn (capital Tabariyya/Tiberias), Damascus and Hims/Emesa – or five, with the addition of Qinnasrin/Chalcis.[20] When Muʿawiya became caliph in 661, the territories of the early Umayyads outside of Syria had been organised since the conquest around the *amsar* of Fustat for the province of Misr/Egypt,[21] Basra and Kufa for the province of Iraq and, from 670 on, Kairouan for the province of Ifriqiya.[22] Administrative authority radiated from those cities and the province (*ard*) encompassed the territories from which taxes were sent back, in part at least, to them.[23]

In Egypt, each province (*ard*) was subdivided into *kura*s and the administrator (*ʿamil*) of each *kura* was located in a local city, the district capital.[24] In Palestine, the *iqlim* was a further unit into which *kuras* were divided, as seen in the Nessana papyri, an echelon absent in Egypt. The Arabic Nessana papyri dating from the 670s provide the earliest attestations of those two terms, which later appear on a rich corpus of Palestinian seals.[25] The registers of the various smaller administrative units were brought to the provincial capital by the local administrators in order to fix the yearly communal tax quotas, as visible under the caliphate of Muʿawiya and in the early Marwanid period.[26] This shows a close control of tax assessment in the province throughout the period.

It is certain that only a very small number of Umayyad subjects knew that those divisions were called *kura*s or *iqlim*s. Throughout the Umayyad period, Greek and Coptic were the predominant languages for administrative practice in Egypt and the Greek term pagarchy (*pagarchia*) is used for what contemporary Arabic texts called *kura*s. Within those districts, the unit for tax assessment was the village (Greek, *chorion*, Arabic, *qarya*).[27] According to Jean Gascou, the term *chorion* was

introduced in Egypt during the conquest from administrative traditions picked up in Syria or Asia Minor.[28]

Communications between each region and within each provinces were slow; it took at least 15 days to travel or send messages from Damascus to Fustat, 20 days from Damascus to Kufa and close to a month to Basra.[29] In the early eighth century in Aphrodito, between ten days and two months spanned between the moment letters were written in the name of the governor Qurra b. Sharik (in office 709–14) in Fustat and the day they reached the village (*c.* 400 kilometres south).[30] Hoyland argues that one of the features explaining the success of Muʿawiya's administration laid in the appointment of loyal governors in Egypt and Iraq.[31] In light of these slow means of communication, loyal and, to a large extent, autonomous governors indeed appear as key to a successful empire. This is visible in significant periods of Umayyad stability: the caliphates of Muʿawiya, ʿAbd al-Malik b. Marwan (r. 685–705) and Hisham b. ʿAbd al-Malik (r. 724–43), during which governorships of Egypt and Iraq were the longest.[32] Along those lines, Egypt and Iraq are often described as 'super provinces' in the secondary literature from which the rest of the empire was controlled. However, this term is not reflected in contemporary sources nor in Abbasid literature.

Governors in Iraq and Egypt indeed played a key role in the expansion of the empire eastward and westward and in setting up the administration of newly conquered territory. According to Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam (d. 871), the appointment of the *amir* of Ifriqiya was the prerogative of the governor of Egypt.[33] The first governor appointed there was ʿUqba b. Nafiʿ (d. 683), the half-brother of the conqueror of Egypt, ʿAmr b. al-ʿAs (d. 664).[34] Hicham Djaït dates the administrative autonomy of Ifriqiya from Egypt to 705. According to the Egyptian *Book of Governors* of al-Kindi, the then governor of Ifriqiya, Musa b. Nusayr (d. 716), bypassed the newly appointed governor of Egypt, ʿAbd Allah b. ʿAbd al-Malik (d. 749–50), and corresponded directly with the caliph.[35] Corisande Fenwick argues that material evidence indicates that the establishment of a gold mint in Kairouan, together with new coinage and weight standards, after the fall of Carthage in 698, points to an earlier establishment of a fiscal administration.[36] Beyond the local administration of taxes, links between Egypt and the naval expansion into the Mediterranean seem to have endured. The governor Qurra b. Sharik was clearly involved in the *cursus* of Africa, the naval expeditions towards Ifriqiya in 710.[37] In the 720s, Egyptian taxpayers were still requisitioned for the Umayyad fleet.[38]

Evidence from Egypt clearly shows that Umayyad administration was fully functioning in that province without the implementation of a local gold mint. Indeed, no gold coinage was minted in Egypt until the early Abbasid period as the Syrian gold coinage was sent there until then.[39] However, this seems to have been systematic in North Africa and al-Andalus. A gold mint was set up in *al-Maghrib*, at least visible in one gold coin dated to AH 105/723–4 CE. The administration of al-Andalus is also visible in the minting of gold coins, in a mint that was originally mobile and eventually settled in Cordoba in 98/716–17.[40] In al-Andalus, a rich corpus of silver and copper coins and lead seals also allows for the reconstruction of the collection of booty for the payment of the conquering army as well as the fiscal contribution of a few cities.[41]

As for Iraq, though this is mainly documented in later literature, descriptions of the governorship of al-Hajjaj b. Yusuf (in office 695–714) make clear that he was ruling a super-province of the east extending into Khurasan and Sijistan.[42] Ifriqiya and al-Andalus were not the only regions that were increasingly integrated to the Umayyad caliphate militarily and administratively at the turn of the eighth century. In the north and east, the Jazira and Khurasan became the bases for regular attempts to control Armenia and Central Asia.[43] The 'Umayyad North' was raided from Northern Mesopotamia (Qinnasrin and the Jazira) and the Umayyad east from Iraq and Khurasan. However, attempts at controlling those faraway regions seem to have met limited success and only secured intermittent payment of tribute.[44] In all, there is no significant evidence that a regular administrative and fiscal system was implemented in the Umayyad North or in Central Asia in the Umayyad period.[45]

FISCAL ADMINISTRATION

The fiscal system was presented above as one of the core elements of state administration. It matched the decentralised structure of the Umayyad hierarchy as fiscal revenues appear to have been mainly used within the provinces. Maintaining loyalty to the caliphate among largely autonomous governors who had great control over their provincial revenue appears as the great achievement of the above-mentioned caliphs: Muʿawiya, ʿAbd al-Malik and Hisham.[46]

The overview of fiscal practices in early eighth-century Egypt provided by Harold I. Bell in his 1910 introduction to the publication of the Greek documents of Aphrodito has not been significantly challenged. Bell's key points can be summarised as follows. Taxes can be divided between those paid in cash and in kind or between the regular public taxes (land tax, poll tax, expense tax[47] and corn tax) and the extraordinary taxes. This latter category is particularly interesting as it corresponds to requisitions for the cost of articles or for the cost of forced labour. They were used in Egypt for the collection of resources and workers for the building projects of the Umayyads in Syria and Palestine, for supplies sent to Arabia and for the naval expeditions in the Mediterranean. However, they were only extraordinary by name as their amount was fixed from year to year.[48] This implies that the Umayyad fiscal system had embedded the necessity of the empire to build and expand every single year and this was supported by the collection and transfer of resources to the surrounding provinces – a truly polycentric system, at least in the first decades of the eighth century.

The large amount of taxes collected in kind visible in Egypt since the time of the conquest and throughout the Umayyad period justified the extraction of resources directly from the villages as the basis for tax assessment.[49] As an innovation from the early Islamic period, this diversified collection of taxes in kind and workers was supported by a complex system of records. The proliferation of paperwork in Umayyad administration can be seen as a feature of this close control of the Egyptian resources and population.[50] Tax assessment was indeed a very serious business, as Bell explains, assessors in charge of compiling fiscal registers did that under oath.[51] Threats of corporal chastisements or heavy fines in cases of unfair assessment appear regularly in the papyri, with a few references to administrators getting their hair and beard shaved as a punishment for administrative misconduct.[52] The close control of

tax collection can also be inferred from the wealth of Palestinian seals. N. Amitai-Preiss argues that the administrator of each locality was given a seal to record tax payments of his local community.[53]

In what follows, two other taxes are examined: the poll tax and forced labour. Both were common in Roman times but, in the seventh century, they were undoubtably perceived as innovations, as the Roman administrative memory couldn't have endured over such a long chronology. However, it is debated whether they are both Umayyad innovations or if they were in fact already employed in the years immediately following the conquest. Both are most richly documented in Egyptian papyri, but information can be gleaned from literature produced in other regions as well.

The poll tax

The poll tax appears as *diagraphon* or *andrismos* in Greek and Coptic administrative documents from Egypt. It was a sub-category of the regular public gold tax.[54] Arietta Papaconstantinou and Jean Gascou have both shown convincingly that the poll tax collected in the seventh century was not a religious tax. It was a convenient form of fiscal payment that could be asked from conquered populations without any new complex calculations that the establishment of new rates on other types of taxes, such as the land or corn taxes, would have required. In other words, the poll tax was paid by the conquered and the conquerors received that payment among others – there was no religious consideration attached to those two categories.[55] There were three different rates in the seventh century: 1, ½ or $^1/_3$ of a gold coin, the amount depending on wealth and exemption were applied for the poor.[56] The same two scholars disagree on the date of introduction of the poll tax: for Gascou it directly followed the conquest while Papaconstantinou points to the ambiguity of the material before the caliphate of Muʿawiya. For instance, she understands a passage in the *Maronite Chronicle* as describing the introduction of the poll tax in Syria for the Jacobites only under Muʿawiya.[57]

Among this early ambiguous evidence, a Greek letter from Egypt dated to the 640s by Federico Morelli refers to a request from the conquerors to collect the *andrismos*, something that the local administrators fear might cause tax payers to flee.[58] One Coptic document from the 640s or 650s with a census of men above 14 years old can be understood as referring to the collection of the poll tax.[59] In the following decades, the papyrological evidence is equally sparse. Papaconstantinou has shown that the available evidence does not allow to argue that the poll tax was collected regularly for the rest of the seventh century in Egypt and in Syria. It is far better documented in the eighth century, in Aphrodito and especially in the Djeme (Upper Egypt, Theban region) where 106 Coptic tax receipts for the poll tax were written by a single scribe over a very short period of time, between April/May 727 and October 729, that is under the caliphate of Hisham b. ʿAbd al-Malik. It was paid in arrears in several instalments in the first part of the fiscal year. The Theban documents reveal a tight control over tax collection as single tax receipts issued at the level of the village were signed by up to five local officials.[60] The poll tax was also imposed on monks in the Marwanid period.[61] In another Egyptian context, a new department of monastic administration was created in the monastery of Bawit (Middle Egypt), the 'fathers of the *andrismos*', to deal with this new tax.[62]

Forced labour

Petra Sijpesteijn differentiates between two types of forced labour in Umayyad Egypt: work assignment (Greek, *allage*) and forced compulsory service (Greek, *angareia*).[63] The first one was accomplished in the district of residence of the tax-payer and does not appear to have been paid. It was for work primarily on irrigation structures, canals, dykes or riverbanks.[64] Anastasius of Sinai (d. after 700) might be describing the same practice when he refers to Christians being requisitioned for work in fields of the Dead Sea region.[65] Forced labour was required mainly, though not exclusively, from men, including monks.[66]

The second type was similar to conscription as it was paid but it was still considered as a form of fiscal payment. It also implied the mobility of workers. A small number of workers in Aphrodito were sent for construction work in Fustat, in Palestine and in Damascus.[67] Caulkers were sent to the shipyards of Babylon already in the time of Muʿawiya.[68] The documents of Aphrodito show that caulkers were still sent to Babylon in the early eighth century, alongside carpenters, fullers and blacksmiths, and that workers were also sent to the Red Sea port of Clysma/Qulzum.[69] Anastasius of Sinai also refers to Palestinian workers sent to the same port, presumably they served alongside Egyptians either in the shipyard or as rowers on the boats.[70] Back in Aphrodito, workers were primarily requisitioned for the military raids against the Byzantine empire, the *cursus*.[71] Egyptian workers served in the fleet as sailors and helmsmen.[72] Up to 69 sailors were requisitioned together in the small village of Aphrodito.[73]

The Umayyad state required skilled workers from the pagarchies of Egypt.[74] Under the caliphate of Muʿawiya, Papas the pagarch of Edfu expressed his anxiety when facing the request for skilled workers to be sent to Fustat that he could not find in his circumscription. We find mention in the same dossier of workers escaping forced labour in the shipyards of the capital.[75] It is probable that individuals arrested in the Hermopolite region had tried to escape forced labour from the very earliest moments of the conquest and that this form of taxation was already unpopular.[76] Though in theory tax payers needed to comply when requisitioned, and the Umayyad state tried to make sure of that,[77] there are numerous attestations of payments provided as alternatives, a payment that allowed the state to employ other workers. Some tax payments were collected explicitly in order to pay the wages of requisitioned workers.[78] Once sent on naval expeditions for the *cursus*, things did not always go as planned, as is visible in one letter of the governor Qurra b. Sharik where he is quite desperately asking the administrator of Aphrodito what happened to the sailors who went on raids to Ifriqiya with ʿAta b. Rafiʿ (d. 703–4).[79]

There is no evidence indicating that the type of fiscal requisitions for forced labour visible in Egypt were practised on the same scale in other regions of the caliphate. For the *cursus*, later literature remembers the contribution of Egyptian sailors to Umayyad expansion in the Mediterranean.[80] Anastasius of Sinai indicates that only Egyptian workers and no others cleared rubble on the Temple Mount for the construction of the Dome of the Rock.[81] The question remains why the Umayyads did not employ Palestinian, Syrian or Iraqi workers instead.

Another phenomenon is visible on the frontiers of the empire. Military service, with specific reference to cavalry, is said to have been provided by local warlords

as or in lieu of money tax payment in Armenia, Albania, Jurjan and Tukharistan.[82] According to the Armenian *History* attributed to Sebeos (*c.* 660), this was practised as early as Muʿawiya's governorship of Syria (starting in 639). The text refers to a tribute of 15,000 cavalry active in Armenia – 'I shall not request the cavalry for Syria; but wherever else I command that they shall be ready for duty' – and to sustenance, supposedly for the same cavalry.[83] This is echoed in a treaty transmitted by al-Tabari (d. 923) that he dates to 642/3 between 'Suraqa b. ʿAmr and Shahrbaraz, the governor of Bab al-Abwab/Darband and all Armenians', where 'he promised freedom from taxation to those who served to defend the frontier and the payment of *jizya* (that is, the public gold tax) to those who refused'.[84] In the east, the tenth-century author relates the same arrangement with reference to Jurjan in 642–3 and Marw al-Rud in Tukharistan in 652–3: a cash payment was provided by those who did not fight and the *asawira* (cavalry according to the Sasanian model) provided a military contribution.[85] Those two narratives present continuity with a Sasanian practice of relying on local cavalries in the frontier regions.[86] All of these references point to arrangements put in place before the beginning of the Umayyad dynasty. However, as the Armenian *History* attributes such decision to Muʿawiya, it is arguable that they are part of an Umayyad phenomenon. As noted above, the loyalty of those local warlords often needed to be renegotiated by the Umayyads, especially in the east. However, in Armenia, Ghewond (late eighth century) describes regular interactions between the Marwanid governors of the north and the Armenian cavalry, as well as the Bagratuni cavalry's support for the last Umayyad caliph Marwan b. Muhammad as late as the time of the third civil war (starting 744).[87] This suggests that such arrangements for military service in lieu of tax payment were maintained in Armenia throughout the Umayyad period.

Among later perceptions of forced labour in the Umayyad period, al-Yaʿqubi (d. 897) attributes this innovation to Muʿawiya. However, as seen above, this was surely implemented in Egypt before his caliphate.[88] From the point of view of some Abbasid narratives, forced labour was one of the negative aspects of Umayyad rule for those who accused them of turning the caliphate into kingship (*mulk*).[89] This raises the question of whether or not this practice survived the end of the Umayyad period. Some texts point to the caliph ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAziz (r. 717–20) putting an end to it. His fiscal rescript, transmitted in an Egyptian biography written in the early ninth century by Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam (d. 829),[90] focuses in section XVI on the abolition of forced labour (*sukhra*) because it lead to 'injustice and tyranny'.[91] If this is true, this measure did not outlive the caliph as a document from Djeme reveals that the local 'great men' of the village were still trying to avoid forced naval duty in 724, assuring that they would provide payment to the authorities if they did not fulfil this task. However, only one document from this village refers to this type of fiscal payment – as described above, most of them are concerned with the poll tax.[92] Beyond ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAziz and Egypt, according to the Syriac *Chronicle of 1234*, upon his accession in 724 the caliph Hisham 'ordered waters and canals to be dug in the direction of the desert by free and forced labour … from the Euphrates above Callinicum (Raqqa) and he established plantations and gardens'.[93]

The latest Greek documents referring to forced labour in Egypt are dated paleographically to the eighth century. It is then hard to know based on this evidence only if forced labour was also a feature of the Abbasid period. For instance, a

list of workmen from the Heracleopolite – the administrative district directly south of Fustat – was interpreted as referring to requisitions for forced labour: maintenance of the irrigation system or building project, and the editor indicates that the text was written in an official hand 'well into the eighth century'.[94] There is no reference to forced labour in any published Arabic document from Egypt.[95] Only the thirteenth-century recension of the *History of the Patriarchs of Alexandria* traces this practice into the Abbasid period describing how under the caliphate of al-Mansur (r. 754–75), the patriarchs and bishops of Egypt did not have to pay any money taxes and were required to work in the 'arsenals of Misr'.[96] One document referring to forced labour in the Abbasid period does, however, appear on the other side of the empire. 'Expenses of pack-animals used for *corvée* duty' (*nafaqat dawabb al-sukhra*) are mentioned in an early Abbasid fiscal receipt from Khurasan dated to 765.[97] Based on the example of Raqqa, Michael Meinecke argues that early Abbasid constructions in Mesopotamia were being fuelled by forced labour.[98] Taken together, this evidence does fit the wider picture of well-known administrative and fiscal continuities between the late Umayyads and the early Abbasids, at least until the end of the eighth century, as well as with the well-attested building activities of the early Abbasid caliphs.[99]

MARWANID REFORMS AND MEMORIES OF ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGE

Administrative reforms under the Umayyads are often understood as something that can be attributed primarily to the early Marwanids, in association with ʿAbd al-Malik's reform of the coinage and the surveys and population censuses under his successors that allowed for changes in tax rates.[100] However, the caliphate of Muʿawiya b. Abi Sufyan is now often presented as laying the foundations of the Umayyad state, with the era of ʿAbd al-Malik and the early Marwanids as the apogee. In contrast, the later Umayyads are rarely praised for their contribution to the Umayyad state.[101] Taking things one step further, Arietta Papaconstantinou observes: 'we are not dealing with a single thought-out reform but rather with ongoing adjustments to the system'.[102]

Multilingualism, public documents and the Arabian background

One aspect of Umayyad administration which has been clouded by a narrative of 'language reform' in the Marwanid period is the endurance of multilingual communications until the end of the Umayyad period.[103] Papyrus documents from Palestine and Egypt clearly show that on one side, Arabic was used in administrative documents before ʿAbd al-Malik and, on the other side, that Greek and Coptic were the dominant administrative languages in the Nile Valley until the end of the Umayyad period. Arabic documents are a small minority in the available corpus of administrative texts (correspondence, tax demand notes and receipts, petitions, etc.).[104] As mentioned above, in the village of Djeme in Upper Egypt, the collection of the poll tax by local administrators in the 720s can be studied on the basis of hundreds of Coptic documents.[105] Only the highest echelons of the administrative hierarchy, in the cities, were drawing up documents in Arabic.

In Egypt, administrative documents in Greek were produced until the early ninth century[106] and, interestingly, Coptic becomes an administrative language during the Umayyad period, precisely during ʿAbd al-Malik's rule.[107] A notable change in Egypt in the Umayyad period was that documents written entirely in Arabic were sent to the lowest levels of the administrative hierarchy, as is visible in the village of Aphrodito, where payments for a scribe writing in Arabic appear in the register of expenses of the village.[108] This scribe could have translated the Arabic missives when necessary and could have sent replies to Fustat in the same language, though Arabic responses from the village have not been preserved. Drawing on the governor's letters received in Aphrodito, Mathieu Tillier has shown that different administrative bureaux functioned in different languages. Correspondence about taxes was mainly composed in Greek, as were detailed requests for forced labour and the records of fiscal fugitives. In contrast, missives concerning legal cases were written in Arabic.[109]

Considerations of the so-called language reform of ʿAbd al-Malik also commonly simplify the administrative hierarchy. It is a usual assumption to make that most administrative documents written in the largest cities of the Umayyad realm used mainly Arabic by 750 but it is impossible to prove this with any certainty. It is however clear that administrators in the *kura*s in Egypt still issued documents in Greek; some of them are documents issued by administrators with Muslim names appointed in the Egyptian valley for example Najid b. Muslim in the Fayyum (in office 730s–750s).[110] They originate from only one administrative level below the capital in Fustat. This shows that if we believe that there were measures under ʿAbd al-Malik aimed at imposing one language for all administrative documents in the empire, they had not succeeded by the time of the Abbasid takeover.

This misleading narrative of reform has also overshadowed other aspects of the development of Arabic in administrative correspondence. Geoffrey Khan has shown that the documents written in Arabic in Egypt and Palestine after the Islamic conquest and throughout the Umayyad period shared a common administrative and legal culture that found its roots in the Arabian Peninsula. Epistolary and formulaic traditions are also shared with documents from the eastern part of the empire, such as a letter from the Sogdian notable Diwashti to the Umayyad governor of Khurasan Jarrah b. ʿAbd Allah (in office 718–19) and other eighth-century documents found in Tajikistan.[111]

The Arabian background can also help us to understand the public use of Arabic administrative texts specifically in the Umayyad period. Old south Arabian monumental inscriptions containing legal texts and treaties that were copies of original documents might be the key to understanding monumental Umayyad public texts previously interpreted as doodles or drafts: several dozens of texts written on marble slabs from Syria including a letter to the caliph Hisham b. ʿAbd al-Malik from Khirbat al-Mafjar and a tax receipts from Andarin.[112]

According to Khan, this practice of displaying documents gave them a public status and can be traced from the pre-Islamic period into the early Islamic literature describing the practice of hanging documents at the Kaʿba.[113] This means that painting documents on walls or marble slabs and displaying documents on soft materials can be considered to have been part of the same phenomenon. Several other sources point to the fact that Arabic and Greek documents on papyrus were to be displayed as public texts. In Aphrodito, two Greek letters sent by the governor Qurra b. Sharik are

orders to record all the fiscal fugitives of the districts and to 'collect the headmen and police of the villages (*chorion*) in your district (*diokesis*) and read them the present letter, ordering them to write a copy of it to each village in order that it may be read to the people of their own village and published in their churches'.[114] If we are to trust the thirteenth-century recension of the *History of the Patriarchs of Alexandria*, the governor of Egypt ʿAbd al-ʿAziz b. Marwan (in office 685–705) ordered that Arabic documents bearing anti-Trinitarian messages be displayed on the doors of churches in Fustat and the Delta.[115] Petra Sijpesteijn also discerns in the phrasing of an Arabic letter concerned with the payment of *sadaqa* and *zakat* in the Fayyum and dating from the last decades of Umayyad rule the features of a public document, the content of which needed to be conveyed to the local Muslim community.[116]

Overall, those Umayyad public documents painted or plastered on walls or on marble slabs, or destined to be, appear at the intersection of three different phenomena: a late antique development of painting public texts on walls (or on soft documents placed on walls) when the preceding period had witnessed the proliferation of carved texts,[117] an Arabian tradition of monumental legal and administrative texts and the necessity of the time to display Umayyad rule as visible in early eighth century Egypt, in Greek and in Arabic.

Memories of changes and perceptions of administrative violence

The letters of Qurra b. Sharik give details on the ethos that the governor wanted to find in the Christian administrator of the village of Aphrodito. He was told to act with 'equity and submissiveness … with prudence and goodwill … (showing) integrity'.[118] However, as Papaconstantinou has shown, this benevolent rhetoric of power is found alongside other documents in which serious threats are expressed by the same governor of fines and physical violence if the demands of the state were not met. As she argues, this might show the occasional helplessness of the governor in dealing with the traditional local elites who did not comply with the governor's orders. It seems however that those threats were never clearly put in action and that the highest form of administrative violence that was reached was the replacement of Christian administrators at the local level in the pagarchies/*kuras*.[119] The progressive replacement of Christian pagarchs in the cities of the valley by local *ʿamil*s and the suppression of the Byzantine provincial system in Egypt meant a significant loss of economic power at the local level. Those local elites were progressively losing the leverage they traditionally had on local tax burdens as they were then working for new local appointees of the Umayyad administration.[120] This certainly needs to be added to the list of reasons explaining the successive fiscal revolts that started in the first half of the eighth century, if not considered as the main reason.[121] The memory of this removal of the local elite from the key administrative positions in the cities of the valley is quite resounding in the literary corpus. In the *History of the Patriarchs*, this change of personnel is remembered as the forced conversion of some administrators, in this thirteenth-century context, it is remembered as an act of religious violence.[122]

Beyond threats that were never clearly put in action in Aphrodito, and contemporary with the restrictions on the role of Christian elites in the administration of cities, a certain literary tradition describes other violent means used in support of administrative practice in the early Islamic period. The example that will be taken

here is that of neck-sealing as a record of tax collection or of the status of taxpayers. References are found to this practice in texts written by both Muslim and Christian authors, in Egypt, the Jazira, Iraq, and on the eastern frontier. Chase Robinson's research on the topic has shown that the only material evidence that can be precisely identified as neck-seals date from the Abbasid period.[123] The wealth of Umayyad seals especially found in Syria, Egypt and al-Andalus were attached to letters or bags of money to record tax collection or distribution of plunder and not to the necks of tax payers.[124]

As far as the literary references to neck-sealing in the Umayyad period are concerned, they are all retrospective. As noted by Robinson, they first appear in contexts of changes to the fiscal system: for instance, the newly implemented taxation of monks in the early Marwanid period or following the Marwanids' surveys and population censuses that allowed to change tax rates. Both examples appear in the thirteenth-century recension of the *History of the Patriarchs*.[125] I would add that those narratives concentrate primarily on people who escaped the fiscal reach of the state before the early eighth century if not beyond that date: the monks in the *History of the Patriarchs* or the tax payers of the Jazira, as well as the frontier population that were not clearly part of the tax base of the Umayyad Empire in cities like Samarqand. The narrative of neck-sealing here becomes, as Robinson notes, a symbol of tax payment as a humiliation of conquered people.[126]

The Syriac Chronicles of 819 and 846 describe the administration of Maslama b. ʿAbd al-Malik in the Jazira with statements such as he 'hung seals on the neck of everyone' following a census. This is obviously very dubious as in practical terms: how could a minority ruling elite really entertain such system, as fiscal payments were made through multiple instalments as recorded in Egypt?[127] The census and the ensuing adjustments to the fiscal system were certainly what Maslama implemented in the region and the memory of this change is seen within a framework of humiliation and administrative violence. The same understanding can be applied to al-Tabari's statement that non-Muslims were only allowed in the city after Qutayba b. Muslim's 'conquest' of Samarqand if they stayed for a shorter period than was required for the clay seal around their hand to dry.[128] The population of that region was beyond the fiscal reach of the Umayyad state and Qutayba's campaign can be seen one of the regular and largely unsuccessful attempts appointees of the governors of Iraq made to bring this region under a formal rule.

The episode in Samarqand fits well into another category of narratives. Neck-sealing appears in the description of governorships or conquests that are well-known moments of violence, for instance al-Hajjaj b. Yusuf's governorship of Iraq.[129] Al-Hajjaj is known for his fierce and threatening speeches, arrests, forced migrations as well as, before his governorship, the sack of the holy city of Mecca after which, according to al-Tabari (d. 923), he sealed the necks of Zubayrid supporters.[130] The narratives of Qutayba b. Muslim's campaign similarly abound in violent episodes such as several kilometres of crucified opponents along the roads of Transoxiana.[131]

All these narratives have the attributes of a *topos* that travels across Muslim and Christian literary circles. Neck-sealing appears transferable to specific types of narratives: the integration of newly taxable communities (monks, population of the Jazira) – reflecting the attempt to integrate them whether successful or not (frontier communities) –, changes in the administration (census, survey) and violent

governorships or conquests. We are then dealing with all the problems of interpreting a *topos*. As Robinson puts it: 'only an exceptional practice would produce so few extant sealings and so much outrage amongst the monks, priests and bishops who are responsible for the Syriac, Christian Arabic and Armenian literary traditions.'[132] As noted above, for the Umayyad period, no evidence of seals has been preserved and only a handful of references in the literature, none of which is contemporary to the Umayyad period. Robinson's assumption that neck-sealing would fit well with the administration of Usama b. Zayd al-Tanukhi (in office 714–17) can be rejected as it is based on a misreading of a late source, again, the *History of the Patriarchs*.[133] That passage was misread by Evetts who preferred to read *akhsa al-ruhban*, 'he mutilated the monks', instead of *ahsa al-ruhban*, 'he made a census of the monks', a very logical measure when his aim was to impose the poll tax on them.[134] Were there any marginal attempts to seal the necks of tax payers, conquered populations or prisoners, or was it a literary device that allowed to retrospectively create a narrative memory of violence?[135] In the absence of clear contemporary evidence, the answer to this question says more about the views the person answering it has of the Umayyads than it says about their administration.

CONCLUSION

More than a question of centre and periphery, sources pertaining to Umayyad administration invite us to look at the empire that stretched in the eighth century between the Atlantic and the Indian subcontinent as a polycentric space, where each region had particular administrative dynamics and governors had a decisive role.[136] Not all the regions of that empire came under the same form of administrative scrutiny, especially the frontier regions and those conquered in the eighth century. Throughout the period, the governors retained a close control of their administration in each region. This is visible in the production of an elaborate and multilingual documentary record of administrative practice, something richly preserved in Egypt and with scarcer parallels found in other regions. The administration of the Nile Valley was under close scrutiny, from the control of tax registers from cities and villages sent to the provincial capital visible under Muʿawiya to the detailed record of individual poll tax payment under Hisham. The problem of the representativity of the Egyptian documentation is often raised, and it is certain that conclusions drawn from Egyptian papyri cannot be applied systematically to other regions of the empire. However, when the study of this documentation reveals anachronism or retrospective literary tropes in Egypt, surely caution must be applied regarding those topics for the other regions of the empire.

Administrative practices attested between 661 and 750 cannot always be fully understood as Umayyad innovations. Umayyad administration was the heir of some of the structures and innovations introduced at the time of the Islamic conquest and there is not always a significant break between the two periods, though each stage of Umayyad history brought its share of alterations. Changes of personnel and in linguistic practices have often overshadowed the fact that the administrative hierarchy and fiscal system did not change much, especially the fiscal system as a system of public taxation.[137] Surveys and population censuses allowing for adjustments in tax rates do not imply that the fiscal system in itself changed.[138] In that respect, transformations visible in the early Abbasid period are much more significant.[139]

The main modifications of the Umayyad period appear in the restrictions on the role of traditional local elites in place at the time of the conquest in the *kura*s of the empire. At the beginning of the period – outside of the *amsar* and other places of Arab settlement – these local elites had handled the entirety of administrative practices. In their place the governors progressively imposed new appointees. These new elites wrote administrative correspondence in Arabic as much as in the local languages, they provided legal expertise and did not seem to have any link with the *kura*s they came to administer.[140] The *kura* is the lowest level where this change of elite took place. At the village level, there is no sign that the local elites were replaced and altogether little evidence of Arab presence, at least in Egypt. The village headman however clearly had to answer to a local administrator from the new ruling elite. Where those administrators came from, if they were Arabs, local converts, or appointed from the provincial capital, cannot be deducted from our evidence. Over time, memories of Umayyad administration reflect some of the unpopular measures introduced in this period such as the change of elites at the local level but also the large-scale development of unpopular forms of taxation such as the poll tax and forced labour.

NOTES

1 I am very grateful to Robert Hoyland, Andrew Marsham, Mehdy Shaddel and all members of the early Islam work in progress group at the University of Edinburgh for their comments and suggestions on earlier versions of this chapter. I have also benefitted immensely from discussions with students at SOAS London and the University of Edinburgh on topics of Umayyad administration and those discussions are largely reflected in the following pages, especially with Rowan Pilley and Leone Pecorini Goodall.

2 On the shaping of the fiscal system from below see Papaconstantinou 2010: 71. For references to petitions from early Islamic Egypt, Sijpesteijn 2013: 75, n. 188.

3 On the formation of an Islamic judicial system in the Umayyad period see Tillier 2013, 2017: 41–96, and in this volume.

4 On the use of documentary sources for the study of the Umayyad state see Hoyland 2006. The complex transmission history of the Islamic literature does not allow us to extract administrative concepts attributed to Umayyad caliphs or the Umayyad period without a systematic comparison with contemporary material. For an example of shifts in the meaning of administrative and fiscal terms between the Umayyad and Abbasid period see Legendre 2019: 397–402.

5 This is certainly explained by the long-lasting archaeological interest that remains of the late antique period have attracted in the region, this has allowed to unearth this material, rather than because of its central position in the seventh-to-eighth centuries: Walmsley 2007: 15–30.

6 Noth 1994: 35–6, 48–53. 'These traditions are closely tied to early legal sources which deal with the same question. These early law books, however, owed their existence to a gradual process whereby the conditions which prevailed at the beginning were made into a system. This process of systematisation did not gain real momentum until the first great movement of conquest had come to a halt. Most traditions which deal with law and administration accordingly offer system rather than actual practice. They can hardly be expected to convey the original concerns of the early traditionists' (48–9). He gives as example of such law books Abu Yusuf's (d. 798) and Yahya b. Adam's (d. 818) *Kutub al-Kharaj* and Abu ʿUbayd's (d. 838) *Kitab al-Amwal*.

7 Abbreviations of editions of papyri are given according to the *Checklist of Editions of Greek, Latin, Demotic, and Coptic Papyri, Ostraca and Tablets* (http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/papyrus/texts/clist.html), and *the Checklist of Arabic Documents* (www.ori.uzh.ch/isap/isapchecklist.html).

8 A complete overview of the dossier and the use of the three different languages is provided in Richter 2010. Aphrodito is located *c.* 400 kilometres south of nowadays Cairo.

9 *P.Lond.* IV 1349, 20 (710); *P.Lond.* IV 1380, 11 (710); *P.Heid.Arab.* I 17,1 (709–14); *P.Heid.Arab.* I 1, 19–20 (710), all from Aphrodito.

10 *P.Apoll.* 37, 10 (Edfu, 660s–680s).

11 Hoyland 2006: 405; for the coins: Crone and Hinds 1986: 7. The term *khilafa* 'caliphate' appears at least twice, in an inscription from the Negev with reference to Hisham b. ʿAbd al-Malik (r. 724–43) and on a lead seal mentioning the last Umayyad caliph Marwan b. Muhammad (r. 744–50): Amitai-Preiss 1997.

12 The title is found transcribed or partially translated in Greek, Syriac, Latin, Pahlavi and Armenian. For partial translations see above n. 10 in a Greek papyrus and in Pahlavi on coins: Hoyland 2006: 399. *Protosymboulos* does appear in Greek literature to refer to the caliph but in documentary sources it is only employed in one single surviving Greek papyrus: *CPR* VIII 82 (Arsinoite, 699–700).

13 Marsham 2018: 8. Papyrus protocols were texts painted on the first page of a papyrus roll of the highest quality that were used for state documents: Delattre 2007b: 215–16.

14 Amitai-Preiss 2003–2006: 115–16. A number of biographical dictionaries of governors cover the Umayyad period: for Egypt, al-Kindi (d. 969), *Kitab al-Wulat wa-kitab al-qudat*; for Khurasan see Bosworth (2011) on the Persian text of Abu Saʿid ʿAbd al-Hayy Gardizi (d. 1041). For other regions, the *Tarikh* of Khalifa b. Khayyat (d. 854) and that of al-Tabari (d. 923) offer lists of the governors who were appointed at the end of every given year, though this information is not systematic nor without errors. For example, for Egypt see Younes 2019.

15 Haldon 1995: 381–2, with relevant references at n. 3. The term is very common in Abbasid literature and the earliest documentary mentions appear in two tenth-century inscriptions with reference to the *jund Filastin*: Amitai-Preiss 2016b: 134. Those two inscriptions mention the caliph al-Muqtadir (r. 908–32). For al-Andalus, see in this volume the chapter written by Eduardo Manzano Moreno.

16 Hoyland 2018: 139; Amitai-Preiss 2016a: 121–2, 2016b: 134; Sijpesteijn 2018a: 136, n. 115.

17 Morony 1984: 131–63.

18 Sénac and Ibrahim 2017: 28–9, 86 (n° 30–2).

19 Haldon 1995; Daryaee 2003; Legendre 2016: 13. This reorganization is also visible in the changing map of bishoprics in Palestine: Levy-Rubin 2003: 203–6.

20 For documentary references of those five provinces (lead seals, papyri and inscriptions) see Amitai-Preiss 2016b: 138–41. According to al-Baladhuri (d. 892), the *jund* Qinnasrin was carved out from the *jund* Hims under Yazid b. Muʿawiya (r. 680–3): al-Baladhuri 1866: 132. Amitai-Preiss (2016b: 135) argues than an ephemerous sixth Syrian province, *ard Baʿlabak*, attested on seals and in later literature is visible in the eighth century and was later absorbed by the *jund* of Damascus, though it is not clear when.

21 In sources dating to the Umayyad period, the city appears as Babylon – the name of the Roman fort close to which the new city was founded – or *Fossaton*: *P.Apoll.* 6, 3 (Edfu, 660s–680s).

22 In his publication of a seventh-century letter concerning trade (wine and textiles) between Egypt and North Africa, Yusuf Ragib hypothesises that the name of the city in that period was Ifriqiya and not Kairouan: Ragib 1990: 8–9.

23 The term is also used for an administrative division in al-Andalus on at least one seal: Sénac and Ibrahim 2017: 29.
24 For a list of the Egyptian *kura*s see Grohmann 1959: 43–4.
25 Amitai-Preiss 2016a: 123–6, esp. 125–6 for a list of Syrian (especially Palestinian) *kuras* and *iqlims*; Hoyland 2018: 139.
26 *P.Apoll.* 6 (Edfu, 660s–680s). *P.Lond.* IV 1338 (709), 1339, 1356 (710); *P.Cair.Arab.* III 146 (710), all from Aphrodito.
27 A wider late antique development, that finds its origins in the first half of the seventh century in the Byzantine realm: Brandes and Haldon 2000: 148–50.
28 Gascou 2013: 672–3.
29 Those estimates can be produced through the website of al-Turayya project: https://althurayya.github.io.
30 Cadell 1967: 142–52.
31 Joshua Mabra takes this argument one step further by suggesting that Abu Sufyan was the real father of ʿAmr b. al-ʿAs meaning he was Muʿawiya's half-brother. Muʿawiya would then have had kinship ties to his governors of Egypt and Iraq (Ziyad b. Abi Sufyan). Mabra 2017: 5.
32 Under Muʿawiya: Ziyad b. Abi Sufyan (in office 665–73), then ʿUbayd Allah b. Ziyad (675–84) in Iraq and ʿAmr b. al-ʿAs (second governorship 659–64) then Maslama b. Mukhallad (668–81) in Egypt; under ʿAbd al-Malik: ʿAbd al-ʿAziz b. Marwan (in office 685–705) in Egypt and al-Hajjaj b. Yusuf (in office 695–714) in Iraq; under Hisham, it was only the case in Iraq with Khalid b. ʿAbd Allah al-Qasri (in office 723–38). On Egypt, this is against the argument defended in Mabra 2017, see Legendre (forthcoming) for a complete discussion on this point. For Iraq: Klasova 2018, 56–64.
33 Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 171.
34 Mabra 2017: 93.
35 Djaït 1967: 84–5.
36 Fenwick 2013: 33; Jonson (2014: I, 85) offers that this mint could have originally been a mobile one 'in response to the changing monetary needs of the Muslim army'.
37 *P.Lond.* IV 1350 (Aphrodito, 710).
38 See later in this chapter.
39 Apart from an apparently unsuccessful attempt by the first Marwanid governor: ʿAbd al-ʿAziz b. Marwan: Morton 1986.
40 For the gold mints of North Africa and al-Andalus: Jonson 2014 I, 84–7. Shaddel (forthcoming) argues for the monetary independence of North Africa as well as Tabaristan and Bukhara in the Umayyad period.
41 See in this volume the chapter written by Eduardo Manzano Moreno. As for Sénac and Ibrahim (2017: 28), the connection drawn between seals referring to the population of different cities using the term *ahl* and Egyptian documents cannot support the argument that those seals were struck for the payment of the poll tax. The *jizya* paid by the *ahl al-ard* in the document from Aphrodito mentioned in n. 3 is used to denote the public gold tax, the equivalent of the Greek *diagraphon*, not the poll tax.
42 Klasova (2018: 58) notes that al-Hajjaj 'directly controlled a larger territory than ʿAbd al-Malik himself did'.
43 On the Jazira and how it became a proper province of the Umayyad Empire in the Marwanid period see Robinson 2000: 63–89.
44 Haug (2019: chapter 5) argues that the raids of Qutayba b. Muslim in Sogdiana and Tukharistan were decisive for the Umayyad control of the region but this is contradicted by his later comment that 'throughout the Umayyad and into the Abbasid rule … local lords and population vacillated between support for the Arabs and support for their rivals' (121). De la Vaissière (2007: 44–54) refers to 'une tutelle omeyyade très allégée sur la

région' in Sogdiana after the treaty of Nasr b. Sayyar in 741 (45) and describes how the Sogdian elite preferred alliances with the Turgesh and constantly requested Chinese help to counter the Umayyad advance.

45 For a description of how communities in Central Asia and Armenia were beyond the fiscal reach of the Umayyad state see later in this chapter, and compare Asad and Vacca in this volume.

46 As Wickham (2011: 210–12) puts it: 'what the Umayyads at least achieved was a continued political loyalty to a single Caliphate among the fiscally decentralised armies of each province, however fractious they also were … in the Umayyad period, it was possible to dispute over tax-paying and stay politically loyal'.

47 The expense tax was paid to provide for the sustenance of state officials, sometimes even for the caliph: Bell 1910: xxxi; Gonis, Morelli 2000; Cromwell 2017: 93.

48 Bell 1910: xxv–xxxii.

49 For the village (*chorion*) as basis for fiscal assessment see notes 27 and 28.

50 Cromwell 2017: 169.

51 Bell 1910: xxvii.

52 Sijpesteijn 2018b: 10–12; for other threats against local administrators see below section 3.2.

53 Amitai-Preiss 2016a: 128.

54 Bell 1910: xxv; Cromwell 2017: 93.

55 Papaconstantinou 2010: 58–69; Gascou 2013: 675–7.

56 Gascou 2013: 675–6.

57 Papaconstantinou 2010: 60–4.

58 *CPR* XXII 1 (Hermopolite, 640s). For a full discussion and translation of this documents and of its dating to the 640s or later, see Papaconstantinou 2010: 60–1.

59 *P.Lond.Copt.* I 1079 (Hermopolite, 639–44 or 658–64).

60 The scribe is Aristophanes son of Johannes, studied recently by Jennifer Cromwell, for his fiscal documents: Cromwell 2017: 94–6.

61 A proper investigation of the chronology of that change is very much needed as we can't rely only on the late narrative of the *History of the Patriarchs* (Evetts 1910: 50–1).

62 Delattre 2007a: 102–3.

63 Sijpesteijn 2013: 173–4, n. 309.

64 In parallel to that, she offers that references to paid tax collectors could also be understood as forced labour: Sijpesteijn 2013: 180.

65 Hoyland 1997: 100.

66 Sijpesteijn 2013: 99–100, n. 360; 173, n. 309; on forced labour for women *P.Lond.* IV 1488, 430 (Aphrodito, early eighth century).

67 Wood was also sent there for the same purpose: Morelli 1998.

68 *P.Apoll.* 9 (Edfu, 660–1 or 675–6).

69 Fahmy 1966: 106, n. 5.

70 Hoyland 1997: 11, n. 3.

71 A commonplace conception that Bell had of the Arabs was their disdain for the sea. According to him, this was the reason why they recruited so many Egyptian sailors. However, it is inconceivable that the said Egyptian sailors decided on their own to embark on boats to fight for the glory of the Umayyads against the Byzantine empire. The Umayyads appear to have had, contrary to what Bell proposes, a great interest for naval expeditions especially by the first half of the eighth century. The fighters were the military elites directing those raids and the requisitioned sailors were employed as rowers and helmsmen, they were not responsible for military strategy nor for the actual navigation. In other words, Egyptians transported the military elite and the Arabs did not row themselves. This reflects a rulers/ruled divide more than anyone's disdain

for the sea. Fighting men were the *muhajirun* and *mawali*, clearly mentioned in the documents of Aphrodito: Fahmy 1966: 103–6.

72 Accounts of the recruitment of sailors through the fiscal system are provided by Bell and Fahmy 1966: 98–114. In later narrative sources, Egyptian sailors are mentioned in the accounts of the very first naval expedition against Byzantium, the battle of the Masts (*maʿrakat dhat al-sawari)* in 34/655: Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1927: 189–91.

73 *P.Lond.* IV 1393 (Aphrodito, early eighth century).

74 *CPR* IV 1 (Herakleopolite, 718) is an official request in Coptic to draw a list of skilled workers and apprentices, see Garel 2018.

75 *P.Apoll.* 29 (Edfu, 660s–680s); Foss 2009: 11; *P.Apoll.* 9 (Edfu, 660–1 or 675–6).

76 *CPR* XXX 23 to 27 (Hermopolite, 640s). In a context in which building material was collected from the Egyptian valley for the construction of Fustat, the requisition of workers to contribute to the building effort appears coherent. On the requisitions for the construction of Fustat, see Morelli 2010.

77 *P.Lond.*IV 1508, a Coptic document that refers to the refusal of the Umayyad authorities to accept payment in lieu of sailors for the *cursus*.

78 Fahmy (1966: 109–12) drew tables with costs of provisions, materials and wages per month ranging from $^{2}/_{3}$ of *solidus* for a carpenter to 2 solidi for a shipbuilder, a sailor would receive $1^{2}/_{3}$ *solidus*.

79 *P.Lond.* IV 1350 (Aphrodito, 710).

80 Al-Qadi 2016: 111–21.

81 Flusin 1992: 26.

82 Athamina 1998: 349–50; al-Qadi 2016: 106–7.

83 Vacca 2017: 187–8: as mentioned in a treaty he copies that would have been signed between ' "the Prince of the Ishmaelites," traditionally identified as Muʿawiya, then governor of Syria, and the patrician T'eodoros Rštuni in 652': Thomson et al. 1999: 136.

84 Vacca 2017: 187–8, 191; al-Tabari 1970: IV, 156–7, the term used here for this military service is *hashr*.

85 For Jurjan: Levy-Rubin 2011: 49; al-Tabari 1970: IV, 152–3, for Marw al-Rud: Haug 2019: 71–2; al-Tabari 1970: IV, 310–11.

86 Vacca 2017: 190.

87 Vacca 2017: 125–6, 142, 187–90, 196–7. Vacca is careful not to necessarily understand references to the payment of the Armenian cavalry in Ghewond's text as reference to their enrolment in the military *diwan* in the early Marwanid period. Indeed, such reference could also match a system of paid labour in lieu of cash payment: Vacca 2017: 196, n. 60. In the early Abbasid period, Ghewond also complains 'because the cavalry was maintained through the taxation of their own houses, i.e., that they cannot make money in this situation' (Vacca 2017: 197, n. 62), referring to a similar arrangement to that described by al-Tabari for Jurjan and Marw al-Rud. Haug's statement that the *asawira* of Marw al-Rud joined the Banu Tamim as clients and were given stipends is misleading: Haug 2019: 223, n. 3. He relies on Athamina's (see above note 83) demonstration for the *asawira* in Iraq. However, the two contexts are very different and in al-Tabari's text, the term *asawira* does not necessarily refer to the same group in Iraq and in Marw al-Rud.

88 Al-Yaʿqubi (1883: II, 276) quoted in Hoyland (2006: 402–3) where he already doubted that this was a true reflection of an Umayyad innovation under Muʿawiya.

89 Crone 2004: 44 with reference to al-Baladhuri's (d. 892) *Ansab al-ashraf*, al-Yaʿqubi's (d. 897) *Tarikh*, al-Isfahani's (d. 967) *Kitab al-Aghani*.

90 Father of the *akhbari* of the same name who wrote the earliest preserved Islamic history of Egypt.

91 Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1927: 100; Gibb 1955: 7. Guessous (1996: 134) also mentions Ibn Saʿd's (d. 845) report of the disdain of ʿUmar b. al-Khattab for forced labour.
92 Cromwell 2017: 90–2; *P.CLT 6* (Djeme, 724).
93 Hoyland 2011: 223–4. Earlier Syriac chronicles describe the same measures, but they don't specifically mention forced labour.
94 Gonis 2003: 211, see also Cromwell 2017: 168–9.
95 Fahmy (1966: 98) misread Grohmann's mention of a document relating to liturgies dated to 299 AD as 299 AH (Grohmann 1932: 67).
96 Fahmy 1966: 107. Misr here means Fustat which is odd as the patriarch was still based in Alexandria in the early Abbasid period. This fits better the context of production of the thirteenth-century recension of the text, as the patriarchate of Egypt had moved to Cairo in the Fatimid period.
97 *P.Khurasan* 3, 6 (Balkh, 765), the editor, Geoffrey Khan, reads into this that the animals were used for building projects: Khan 2007: 34.
98 Meinecke 1996: 24–5.
99 For continuities in the administrative and fiscal system: Bligh-Abramski 1988: 232–5; Legendre 2019: 408–10. For the building activities of the early Abbasids: Borrut 2011: 456–66.
100 On the chronology, nature and documentation of the land surveys and population censuses see al-Qadi 2008.
101 Hoyland 2006; Foss 2010; Legendre 2016.
102 Papaconstantinou 2015: 267.
103 For the traditional view on ʿAbd al-Malik's 'language reform' see Robinson 2005a: 72, 125–6, in which the regional disparities in terms of language use are noted, particularly for Iran.
104 Cromwell 2017: 169–70.
105 Cromwell 2017: 94–6.
106 Berkes 2019.
107 Legendre 2016: 14; Cromwell 2017: 13–14, 170–84. This is similar to what Geoffrey Khan argues for Coptic legal documents: 'a process of language shift in the writing of documents among a local population that had previously used Greek documents' (Khan 2019: 23).
108 *P.Lond.* IV 1434, 229 (Aphrodito, 714–16).
109 Tillier 2013: 7–8.
110 Sijpesteijn 2013: 124–36.
111 Kratchkovskaya and Kratchkovsky 1934: 55–90. An English translation of this document can be found on www.islamic-awareness.org/history/islam/papyri/sbornik.html and a French translation in De la Vaissière 2007: 76. Haim et al. 2016: 147–57; Khan 2019: 25–8; this is also visible in early Abbasid documents from Khurasan.
112 All references are given in Hoyland 2018: 137.
113 Khan 2019: 29; Schoeler 2006: 63, with reference to Muhammad b. Habib's (d. 860) recension of Hassan b. Thabit's (d.*c.* 670) *Diwan*.
114 *P.Lond.* IV 1343 (Aphrodito, 709); 1384, (Aphrodito, 708–10); translations in Bell 1911: 274–5, 379–80.
115 Evetts 1910: 25.
116 She precisely sees in this Arabic letter a parallel to the two Greek texts of Aphrodito and proposes an overview of the use of public texts in the late antique and Islamic period: Sijpesteijn 2013: 247–55.
117 Lauxtermann and Toth 2020: xxii. I would like to thank Ine Jacobs for pointing this out to me.

118 *P.Lond.* IV 1349, 6–12, 19–31 (710), quoted in Papaconstantinou 2015: 276–7.
119 Papaconstantinou 2015: 267–8.
120 Papaconstantinou 2015: 280; Legendre 2016: 11–16. The composition of this changing local administrative elite in which Muslims held the key positions and Christians were still largely present at the level of the pagarchy/*kura* in the mid-eighth century is described in detail in Sijpesteijn 2013: 115–216.
121 On the revolts in the Umayyad period see Lev 2012: 208–12.
122 *History of the Patriarchs, PO* V, 50–1: a certain Butrus presented in 704 as the *wali al-Saʿid* meaning governor of Upper Egypt, which corresponds to the duties of the Duke of the Thebaid and Arcadia, would have been forced to convert along with his brother and other Christians. This Butrus is fictitious and in the early decade of the eighth century the duke of the Thebaid and Arcadia was replaced by the *sahib al-kharaj* in Fustat as shown in Legendre 2016: 11–16.
123 Robinson 2005b: 426–7.
124 Sijpesteijn 2018a; those seals are however still often understood as neck-seals for the record of poll tax collection, for example Amitai-Preiss 2016a: 127–31.
125 Robinson 2005b: 415. A pre-Umayyad example is found in the assessment conducted by ʿUthman b. Hunayf in the Sawad of Iraq under ʿUmar b. al-Khattab. Al-Baladhuri presents a dozen versions of that assessment and in only one of them is ʿUthman said to a have sealed the necks of the 'uncircumcised': al-Baladhuri 1866: 269–72.
126 Robinson 2005b: 410–20. For Armenia in the Abbasid period, see Vacca 2017: 191, 205–6, with relevant references.
127 Robinson 2005b: 432.
128 Haug 2019: 112; al-Tabari 1970: VI, 480.
129 For the early Abbasid period, this fits well in the narrative of Musa b. Musʿab's governorship of the Jazira (769–84) a moment of increased fiscal burden on the region as described in the late eighth century text of the *Zuqnin Chronicle* that goes as far as identifying him as the antichrist: Robinson 2000: 156–8.
130 Al-Tabari 1970: VI, 195; Robinson 2005b: 415, n. 66 points to Abu al-ʿArab al-Tamimi's (d. 944–5) *Kitab al-Mihan* claiming that neck sealing was an innovation of al-Hajjaj.
131 Robinson 2005b: 416–17; Haug 2019: 120–23.
132 Robinson 2005b: 428. His statement that neck sealing was 'commonplace by the late eighth century' (423) needs to be reassessed as well, as the available evidence is similarly scarce.
133 Evetts 1910: 68.
134 Robinson (2005b: 428) chooses 'he castrated the monks' – one can honestly ask what would be the point of that. This reading was already corrected by Hoyland (1997: 285, n. 82) and is mentioned by Robinson but he chooses not to follow it. Robinson's argument that we are dealing with 'an imperial programme' of neck sealing needs to be rejected as well as he eventually concludes this practice could only have been marginal. We might find a turning point in the Abbasid period, when 'with Musa b. Musʿab, governor of the north during the later 760s and 770s, the evidence improves': Robinson 2005b: 428–33.
135 On the study of Umayyad memory see Borrut 2011: 179–228.
136 This is not only visible for administration nor only for the Umayyad period, on this topic, see the seminal article of Nef and Tillier 2011.
137 Kennedy 2015.
138 For a complete reflection on the change of state structures in the early Islamic period, see Nef 2014.

139 For instance, with the suppression of taxes assessed in kind at the turn of the ninth century: Legendre 2019: 408–10.

140 They were appointed successively to different *kura*s: Sijpesteijn 2013: 124–36.

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CHAPTER SEVEN

THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC BACKGROUND OF PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATORS IN EGYPT

Lucian Reinfandt

The following chapter has its focus on Egypt as a province of the Umayyad Empire. It is based on a prosopography of officials in a regional context undertaken on the basis of their own writings – that is, administrative documents in Arabic, Coptic and Greek on papyrus from Egypt.[1] Similar, but much less abundant, data is available from other parts of the empire. Important documentary finds have been made in Khurasan during the past years,[2] and significant, albeit scarce, material is available from Iraq and Syria-Palestine as well.[3] While a comparison of the data from Egypt, Iraq and Khurasan remains desirable, this chapter focuses on Egypt in order to use its much larger data set from one province to pursue a prosopographical analysis of the administration of the province.[4]

The principal tasks of the administration in Egypt can be gleaned from the portfolio of the tasks of the provincial governor mentioned in papyri and literary sources. These included the assessment and collection of taxes; the distribution of the soldiers' pay; care for infrastructure in the interests of agricultural production; the upkeep of public order and the defence of territorial borders; the settlement of legal conflicts; and, finally, the organisation and leadership of the public prayer (which was in fact a very important communicative aspect of rule).[5] From these can be assumed a capillary, top-down delegation of duties to middle and lower layers of the hierarchy and from the centre to the periphery. Offices are mentioned in Greek, Arabic and Coptic papyri as well and have cursorily been discussed by Grohmann.[6] But nominal offices rarely corresponded to duties, and vague definitions of responsibilities – at least on higher levels of provincial administration – are typical for the Umayyad administrative apparatus. Only under Abbasid rule was there a greater systematisation of state affairs from the second half of the eighth century on. Instead of nominal designations, it is more worthwhile to look at the social background of administrative personnel for an assessment of Umayyad provincial rule.

SOCIAL FACTORS BEHIND A CLASSIFICATION OF ADMINISTRATORS

Administrators in Umayyad Egypt are exceptionally well represented in papyrus sources. They can be classified by their ethnic backgrounds and settlement patterns,

by their legal status, and by their economic background. Questions of ethnicity and settlement patterns open up the floor for papyrology but also archaeology.[7] These methods and sources provide information on the social composition of the administration at the local level.

Still at the beginning of Umayyad rule there was a rather clear distinction between conquerors and conquered. The military settled in *amsar* (sing. *misr*), which were established in Medina, Damascus, in Harran (in the Jazira), in Kufa, Fustat and Merv (in Khorasan), according to al-Baladhuri (d. *c.* 900).[8] The term *misr* meant a city where the military payrolls (*diwan*) were kept and the annual stipends (*ʿata'*) paid out.[9] In the first decades after the conquest, there were also migrations of Arabian tribes to Egypt from Syria and Iraq, and they settled permanently in Fustat and Alexandria.[10] However, administrators of Arabian heritage start to be mentioned in the papyri 50 years after the conquest, such as ʿAwf b. Nafiʿ, a pagarch (head of district) of the Fayyum in 680/81 (or 695/96).[11] These were household officials sent by the governor, but there were also lower-status personnel such as early scribes of Arabic and bilingual translators.[12] We also hear about witnesses to legal contracts with Arabic names in rural areas as early as 662 and 676[13] as well as Arabian merchants settling around or before 700 CE.[14] Some individuals with Arabic names are mentioned as being both merchants and administrators in the papyri from this this early period of the Arab presence in Egypt.[15]

Then, from the first half of the eighth century on, also Arabians who were not soldiers began to leave Fustat and settle in regional centres in Upper Egypt as traders or administrative clerks, sometimes on behalf of the central administration. The first attestations for such a presence of Arabian administrators in the papyri reach back as far as the second half of the seventh century.[16] These were household officials sent by the governor, but there was also lower personnel such as early scribes of Arabic and bilingual translators.[17] We also hear about Arab witnesses to legal contracts in rural areas as early as 662 and 676 CE[18] as well as Arab merchants settling around or before 700 CE.[19] Also an accumulation of professions was common, with civilian Arabs mentioned both as merchants and administrators in papyri from this this early period of Arab presence in Egypt.[20] Different settlement patterns can be attested as well – for example, larger settlements of northern Arabian tribes in the rural parts of Egypt such as the Eastern Delta (the Hawf) during the later Umayyad period.[21]

The legal status of administrators, on the other hand, left its marks on local legal practice. The papyri provide insight into a change in the social composition of administrative elites on a local level during Umayyad provincial rule. This correlated with a change in local legal practice. A change in the social status of the persons involved is manifest in the decisions between alternative sources of authority to whom one should turn when in need of a conflict resolution. Officials show up in the papyri in connection with legal disputes and similar forms of social conflict. Events in the legal sphere give insight into the actual social status of the persons involved. It is significant in this regard that Muslims and Christians alike sent their petitions and complaints to the local Muslim authorities early on. From this it can be concluded that the petitioning of Muslim authorities enjoyed general acceptance among all social groups. This agrees with observations already made by Arthur Steinwenter on the basis of Coptic papyri.[22] From the beginning of Marwanid rule, Muslim pagarchs acted as local judges for conflicts both between Muslims and Christians and among

Christians alike. There was a general tendency in Umayyad administration to hand down judicial authority to mid- and even low-level administrators. The handing down of competences went along with a gradual replacement of local personnel with Arabic-speaking Muslims.[23] As long as local personnel consisted exclusively or predominantly of non-Muslims, as had been the case before the administrative reforms initiated by the caliph ʿAbd al-Malik around 700 CE, complaints had been addressed to authorities on the governor's level. But since Muslim officials increasingly appeared on the district and village levels, these became the addressees of complaints instead.[24]

Finally, the economic background of administrators can, in outline at least, be deduced from sources of income mentioned in the papyri. In return, these convey an idea of the motives for taking public offices. Officials participated in specific ways in the local economy and may have benefitted more than others from an access to coin money (rather than money of account based upon natural produce). The military was paid in cash and crops according to the stipulations of the payroll (*diwan*). But, as noted above, during the first half of the eighth century, many Arabs ceased to have a primarily military role and turned to occupations like trade or agriculture.[25] On the other hand, participation in a cash economy must have been tempting and must have created incentives for many on the local level to cooperate with the Muslim authorities. From early Muslim Ifriqiya we know about the availability and use of coin money from relatively early on.[26] It seems that becoming an official on the local level opened the doors for social mobility beyond the conventional order dominated by landholding elites. The papyri from seventh-century southern Palestine, on the other hand, show a social structure different from Egypt. Resource extraction here was much more on the local level and out of the control of the caliphal central authorities. The evidence from the papyri confirm that Palestine was heavily settled by Arabian tribes who became major landowners.[27]

TOWARDS A SOCIAL TYPOLOGY OF OFFICIALS

Both the literary sources and papyrus documents offer a wealth of personal data each of which are of significance but which make it hard to maintain an overview. Especially on the diachronic level it is not always easy to point out larger trends. For that reason, a typology of officials is suggested here, which distinguishes between household officials, aristocrats and experts. Such an approach contributes to a better understanding of the phenomenon and deeper comprehension of the social fabric of early Muslim administration than do more conventional distinctions between Muslims and non-Muslims, Arabs and non-Arabs, or military officials and civilians.

Household officials corresponded to what would have been *familiares* in the Roman Empire, namely members of transregional elites with an ethos of obedience and loyalty towards the ruler.[28] Representatives of this type in many pre-modern empires were deprived of family ties and were inserted into the royal household, at times as foreigners. As a general characteristic, they had, like the *mawali* described by Crone, 'forgotten their genealogies … and were notoriously loyal … their education, skills and sheer number was such that they rapidly achieved positions of influence in their own right ... They played an important role as administrators …'[29] Aristocrats, on the other hand, were members of a local elite with a tribal or landholding background. They had a strong local foothold and an ethos of rank.[30] Influential groups of

local landholding elites kept their influence under Muslim rule, such as the pagarchs in Egypt and the *dihqan*s in Persia. It was also during the first decades after the Muslim conquest that local, non-Arabian, gentry served the Muslim ruler as agents of the state.[31,32,33] Their unique characteristic was having a local background, as is shown by the majority of officials appearing in the Arabic papyri from Egypt. Not all of them were of low rank, but all of them put their specific expertise in the service of Arab authorities.

These social types of officials are rarely found in their pure form but are ideal types and beneficial for an understanding of the social composition of a given imperial administration. In practice, they tend to overlap, and it is this mutual overlapping that allows the data retrieved from Egyptian papyri to be put into a historical dynamic. They help to overcome a more static conception of a mere institution-oriented approach and allow for a better perception of the procedural and negotiating character of domination instead. Only now changes become visible in the social composition of provincial administration under the Umayyads.

An example of a typical household official was the provincial governor of Egypt, who was appointed by the caliph. However, on account of his local tribal background, he could have some of the characteristics of the aristocrat. This was the case with governors during the earlier Sufyanid era, who were surrounded by an army of tribesmen and had an additional police-guard (*shurta*) also made up of tribesmen.[34] They benefitted from sufficient local support and could keep their distance from the centre of the empire in Damascus. This changed under the Marwanids. After about 700, governors were more and more recruited from military commanders who had grown up in the army and had little tribal support.[35] The same also applied to all those officials who were under the governors' immediate command, including the first and second generation of Muslim pagarchs during the first half of the eighth century, but high-ranking clients (*mawali*) from the eighth and ninth centuries may fall within this category as well.[36]

For all of these 'household officials', tribal affiliation became less important over time – their social composition not being homogenous but characterised by social stratification. Many of them held administrative positions of middle to lower rank, but a good many of them headed various sections of the *diwan* in the provinces, and some even came to be appointed fiscal governors of important provinces such as Hijaz, Transoxania, Iraq and Egypt. Examples of people of non-Arabian heritage that rose to the position of effective governor of Egypt are Usama b. Zayd as-Salihi (under the caliph Sulayman, r. 715–17), ʿUbayd Allah b. al-Habhab (under the caliph Hisham, r. 724–43), and ʿAbd al-Malik b. Marwan b. Musa b. Nusayr (under the caliph Marwan b. Muhammad, r. 744–50).[37] It seems that this administrative class of clients (*mawali*) became a new kind of social category during the eighth century. After the Umayyad period, they would be but were superseded again by military slaves and eunuchs during the ninth and tenth centuries.[38]

'Aristocratic' administrators were both local, non-Arabian landowning elites who participated in the administration of the empire, and, increasingly, Arabians who settled the land and so joined the local, landowning aristocracy. As noted above, there was also a different kind of 'aristocratic' administrator, who retained his Arabian tribal affiliations; this was an enormously important factor in the evolution of the Umayyad-era empire.

Under Marwanid rule, in the first half of the eighth century, the aristocratic tribal identity that had been characterised by birth privileges lost some of its significance within the armies. New factors such as salaried military service, regionalism, and an awakening interest in economic matters became paramount instead. Already under ʿAbd al-Malik's (r. 685–705) rule, in around 700, the tribally organised army was replaced by a standing army at the service of the government. This was a structural shift from a tribal conquest society towards something more state-like. Meanwhile, not a few descendants of Arabian migrants turned their backs on the military and became traders or agriculturalists during the first half of the eighth century and so often became landed aristocrats themselves, in competition with traditional local elites of a non-Muslim background. There was a tendency in the Umayyad taxation policies in Egypt during the first half of the eighth century to bypass Christian landholding elites and replace them with Arab-Muslim household officials (unlike in Iraq, where the provincial taxation had been put into the hands of tribal Arabs from the beginning).[39]

Although these administrative changes in Egypt in the early eighth century can primarily be characterised as a conflict between local and trans-local aristocratic elites, there were two principal checks on these developments: one being the role of tribal structures for the social fabric of early Muslim empire, and the other one being the settlement of former soldiers in the countryside. The significance of tribal structures was substantial, and 'tribal affiliation was often a significant factor in a person's advancement'.[40] But this was still of an aristocratic nature and, oddly enough, Umayyad Egypt experienced a change from an old aristocratic elite of non-Muslim landholders to another aristocratic elite of tribal Arabs. The strife and factionalism of the later Umayyad caliphate was a logical development of what had been, as it were 'pre-programmed' by the continuation and evolution of Arabian tribal politics in this new imperial provincial context.[41] The other check on the decline of aristocratic forms of administration began when former members of the military settled in the countryside and became a landholding class themselves in the course of the eighth century. The appearance of another group of household officials, now military slaves, during the ninth century can be seen as a reaction against a predominance of landed aristocracies in the Egyptian province.

Naturally, the third, large, group of administrative specialists – the 'experts' – are particularly represented in the papyri. These were expert officials, mainly in the middle and lower ranks of hierarchy, but they could rise to top consultant positions in provincial centres as well. Theirs was a story of emancipation from local aristocracies. An example is the Christian Sergius b. Mansur 'whose family had long been prominent in the administration of Damascus' and who himself became a leading administrator in Syrian affairs under the caliph Muʿawiya b. Abi Sufyan.[42] Other specialists had a more transregional background, however.[43] There is from the Umayyad era the example of the prominent Christian financial expert from Edessa, Athanasius bar Gumoye; when the underage brother of ʿAbd al-Malik became governor of Egypt, Athanasius escorted him and served as effective governor of the province.[44] Many of them came from families that had served already the Byzantines and Sasanians with their specific expert knowledge, and their offspring now served Arab lords. Most were non-Muslims and had Greek, Coptic, or Middle Persian as their native languages.[45] An important change for these groups in Egypt came about

because of a shift from Greek to Arabic as administrative language under the caliphs ʿAbd al-Malik (r. 685–705) and al-Walid b. ʿAbd al-Malik (r. 705–15).

Only the later Umayyad administration witnessed an increase of centralisation and specialisation in the middle layer of administration, and from now on more expert administrators without a client status show up in the papyri. Their typical social capital was the family, and administrative positions were, together with administrative expertise, transmitted within the families. But an accumulation of client status and expertise continued to play a key role insofar as the higher in hierarchy an expert administrator was, the more important an additional background of household official was. Patrimonial relationships were strong at the top and lower layers of administration, while an increasingly professionalised corps of middle layer administrators became more and more independent from the ruling military elites.[46]

CHANGES IN THE SOCIAL COMPOSITION OF ADMINISTRATORS

The middle of the 680s saw a handing over of central power from the Sufyanid to the Marwanid branches of the Umayyad family. This brought along a significant change in the social composition of administrators in Egypt. Local non-Muslim aristocrats who had acted as traditional intermediaries between the Arab authorities and their subjects were replaced by household officials that were more directly responsible to the caliph and his governor but had no local support. A centralisation of administrative structures was expected to augment caliphal power and provincial loyalty at the expense of local landholding elites. At the same time Arabs began to show up as contenders in the agricultural economic sector in their new role as landowners. And finally, there was a relatively large group of expert clerks with aspirations to enter royal households as clients (*mawali*).

In all of this there were two principal driving motivations at work. One of them was the generation of income by participation in the general economic output of the province. The other one was legal security by an improvement in personal legal status. The sources related to administrative practice in Umayyad Egypt create an impression that both economic participation and legal security were the main motives for any collaboration with imperial domination on the local level. Old elites may have worried about the protection of vested interests, while new elites benefitted from prospects for social mobility that transgressed conventional limitations of group and class. Such was the conglomerate of conflicting interests that also determined territorial cohesion in more peripheral parts of the empire. Umayyad provincial administration can be described as a mixture of top- and bottom-level patrimonial structures, with a middle stratum of experts that was moving towards becoming a more socially deracinated body of state administrators.

NOTES

1 Editions of Arabic papyrological sources are cited according to the *Checklist of Arabic Documents* and the *Arabic Papyrology Bibliography of Editions and Research*; compare Institut für den Nahen und Mittleren Osten (2018a and 2018b) (both accessed 22 December 2018). On the history of Umayyad Egypt in general Kennedy 1998; 2004; Sijpesteijn 2013.

2 Documentary finds from Khorasan are treated in Khan 2007 (documents in Arabic); Sims-Williams 2012 (documents in Bactrian); and Shaked and Naveh 2012 (documents in Aramaic). Compare in this regard also the Oxford based Balkh Art and Cultural Heritage Project 2015.
3 Reinfandt 2012; 2014: 139–40.
4 See Choksy 1997; Campopiano 2012; Verkinderen 2015.
5 Thus partially in Hawting 2000: 35.
6 Grohmann 1964.
7 Athamina 1986; Donner 1989.
8 Hawting 2000: 35; Kennedy 2001: 7.
9 Kennedy 2001: 62.
10 Athamina 1986: 201–2; Sijpesteijn 2013: 59, n. 6.
11 *CPR XXII* 11; 12; Gonis and Morelli 2002: 23.
12 Mikhail 2014: 92; *P.Berl.Arab.* II 23 (undated official letter); possible tax payers mentioned in *P.DelattreEntagion* (AH 74/694 CE, Ansina/Antinoopolis).
13 *P.RagibJuridiction* 1 (AH 42/662–3 CE, Egypt); 2 (AH 57/676–7 CE, Egypt).
14 *P.RagibPlusAncienneLettre*; *P.DiemRemarkableDocuments* 1; *P.ReinfandtLeinenhändler* (all being undated business letters).
15 Sijpesteijn 2013: 149.
16 Sijpesteijn 2013: 95–6.
17 Mikhail 2014: 92; *P.Berl.Arab.* II 23 (undated official letter); possible tax payers mentioned in *P.DelattreEntagion* (AH 74/694 CE, Ansina/Antinoopolis).
18 *P.RagibJuridiction* 1 (AH 42/662–3 CE, Egypt); 2 (AH 57/676–7 CE, Egypt).
19 *P.RagibPlusAncienneLettre*; *P.DiemRemarkableDocuments* 1; *P.ReinfandtLeinenhändler* (all being undated business letters).
20 Sijpesteijn 2013.
21 Kennedy 2001: 81–5.
22 Reinfandt 2014: 135 with reference to Steinwenter 1955: 53.
23 Hawting 2000: 61.
24 Reinfandt 2014: 142 and, in general, Simonsohn 2011.
25 Sijpesteijn 2009; 2013; Hawting 2000: 62.
26 Compare, in this regard, the chapter by Corisande Fenwick in this book. The availability of, and the access to, coin money rather than money of account or natural produce may be an indicator for an increased social mobility; compare Illisch 2008.
27 *P.Ness.* See in the same way Kennedy 2001: 67: 'This was a local system which must have put substantial power into the lands of the clan chiefs and deprived the governor of direct authority.'
28 'Die Diener sind in völliger persönlicher Abhängigkeit vom Herrn, entweder rein patrimonial rekrutiert: Sklaven, Hörige, Eunuchen – oder extrapatrimonial aus gänzlich rechtlosen Schichten, Günstlinge, *Plebejer*' (Weber 2009: 219). 'The ruler recruits his officials in the beginning and foremost from those who are his subjects by virtue of personal dependence (slaves and serfs), for of their obedience he can be absolutely sure' (Weber 1978: 1026).
29 *EI2*, 'Mawlā' (P. Crone); Crone 1986: 875–7 (here: on *mawali*).
30 'Die Diener sind nicht persönliche Diener des Herrn, sondern unabhängige, kraft Eigenstellung als sozial prominent geltende Leute; sie sind durch Privileg oder Konzession des Herrn mit ihrem Amt beliehen (tatsächlich oder der Legitimitätsfiktion nach) oder haben durch Rechtsgeschäft (Kauf, Pfand, Pacht) ein nicht beliebig entziehbares Eigenrecht an dem ihnen appropriierten Amt, ihre Verwaltung ist demgemäß, wenn auch begrenzt, autokephal und autonom, die sachlichen Verwaltungsmittel befinden sich in ihrer Regie, nicht in der des Herrn: ständische Herrschaft' (Weber 2009: 219–20). 'When not only economic but also lordly [political] rights are bestowed [upon the official] to exercise on his

own, and when this is associated with the stipulation of personal services to the lord to be rendered in return, a further step away from salaried bureaucracy has been taken' (Weber 1978: 967).

31 Donner 2012: xxi.

32 Sijpesteijn 2013: 111–12.

33 'Die objektive Grundlage der bürokratischen Macht ist ihre durch spezialistische Fachkenntnis begründete technische Unentbehrlichkeit' (Weber 2009: 46). 'The primary source of the superiority of bureaucratic administration lies in the role of technical knowledge which through the development of modern technology and business methods in the production of goods has become completely indispensable' (Weber 1978: 223).

34 Hawting 2000: 35.

35 Hawting 2000: 62.

36 On the situation of clients (*mawali*) in Umayyad Egypt compare *EI2*, 'Mawlā' (P. Crone); Onimus 2005. Compare for a later period, Weil 1967: 304: 'Türken waren nur dem Kalifen allein ergeben'.

37 *EI2*, 'Mawlā' (P. Crone).

38 Kennedy 1998: 82.

39 Sijpesteijn 2009: 123.

40 Donner 2012: xxii. Compare also Weil (1967: 304): 'Araber waren damals deutlich ständisch geprägt'.

41 Crone 1980:74–81.

42 Foss 2010: 83.

43 Already in the sixth century BC the Achaemenids had, after their conquest of the Neo-Babylonian empire, made use of subjected 'nations' for specific purposes; Egyptians for example were considered unrivalled accountants and were subsequently imported in large numbers to the Achaemenid capital, Susa: Jursa 2007.

44 Donner 2012: xx. The same holds true for a later period with scribes and administrators of a Persian background who came in larger numbers to Egypt during the ninth century: Tillier 2011: 389.

45 Hawting 2000: 62.

46 Compare for the legal sphere Reinfandt 2014: 129.

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CHAPTER EIGHT

THE UMAYYADS AND THE FORMATION OF ISLAMIC JUDGESHIP

Mathieu Tillier

According to a statement attributed to the second Abbasid caliph, al-Mansur (r. 754–75 CE), the *qadi* was one of the four pillars of the state.[1] Islamic judgeship appeared indeed as one of the most emblematic urban institutions of the Abbasids. It was the symbol of a social order based on religious jurisprudence (*fiqh*) and guaranteed by the government. Yet, the *qadi*'s position at the crossroads of government, religion and society resulted from an evolution that is still imperfectly known. Émile Tyan's work of 1960 remains a major reference on the history of judicial institutions in Islam.[2] However, its principal weaknesses are a certain tendency to generalize from Egyptian examples – Tyan's main source was al-Kindi, and he did not know Waki'ʿ's book on judges – and too positivist a reading of legal sources. His studies have mainly been supplemented by those of Robert Brunschvig and Joseph Schacht, who were particularly interested in the law of evidence.[3] More recently, Wael Hallaq has questioned the role of judges in the formation of Islamic law,[4] Steven Judd devoted a long chapter to Umayyad *qadi*s and their relationship with rulers[5] and Christopher Melchert published an important study on the judicial oath in early Islamic times.[6]

However, the Abbasid literary sources used by most historians partially blur our understanding of Umayyad judgeship. Their authors were driven by a quest for authority, and often adopted a teleological approach. That is, when recounting the history of former *qadi*s and reporting cases they adjudicated, they were looking for the roots of the system as it existed in their own time. They offer a standardized image of the institution, rarely subject to variations, which makes it difficult to distinguish between a historical nucleus and possible projections on the past. In order to achieve a better understanding of the Umayyad judgeship, we must therefore not only pay attention to any signs of change while rereading literary sources, but also take into account types of sources still often neglected by historians: documentary sources on papyrus, as well as 'ancient schools' legal doctrines preserved in early Abbasid literature, such as ʿAbd al-Razzaq al-Sanʿani and Ibn Abi Shayba's *Musannaf*s.

Indeed, one of the most important challenges of modern research on early Islam is our ability to breech the historiographical filter imposed by Abbasid models, which causes an impression of temporal and geographical uniformity. As for Umayyad judgeship, to what extent is it possible to bring into focus differentiated regional

developments of the institution? What dynamics of unification presided over the development of a legal 'Islamic' system? This chapter will show that the Umayyad period was a crucial one for the construction of Islamic judgeship, through the gradual establishment of administrative and legal structures that achieved their full development under the Abbasids.

JUDGES

Literary sources, such as chronicles and biographical dictionaries, mention judges called *qadi*s from the beginning of the Umayyad period, at the latest.[7] However, no documentary evidence attests to the existence of these 'proto-*qadi*s'.[8] In the current state of research, no Palestinian or Egyptian papyrus, nor any document from Khurasan, throws any direct light on the institution during the first century of Islam. The only hypothetical appearance of the word *qadi* in an Umayyad papyrus dates back to 730 or 740, but no judicial role is associated with the bearer of this title.[9] The documentary absence of the word does not necessarily mean the inexistence of the institution. Available papyrological sources come mainly from the Egyptian countryside, overwhelmingly inhabited by Christian populations, where justice long stayed in the hands of institutions inherited from Byzantium, such as dukes and pagarchs.[10] Most Muslims were in Fustat, the provincial capital, where very few papyri have been found so far. Therefore, this documentary absence of *qadi*s suggests only that this institution did not exist in secondary towns and rural areas of Egypt. That is not surprising given the low rate of Islamization of the province under the Umayyads.

During the Sufyanid period, as documented by the dossier of Papas, pagarch of Edfu, the main judicial authority in Upper Egypt was apparently the duke of Thebaid, who was based in Antinopolis, assisted by his lieutenant, the *topoteretes*. Everyday justice was probably dispensed by local pagarchs, at the level of the *nome/kura*.[11] In early Marwanid times, Christian pagarchs still acted as judges, as evidenced by governor Qurra b. Sharik's (r. 709–14 CE) letters. A handful of Palestinian papyri, dating back to the late seventh century and discovered in Khirbet el-Mird, suggest that in this part of Bilad al-Sham, justice was rendered by another type of administrator. Although the exact title of these judges is unknown, they may have been sort of deputy governors and were, for their part, Muslims.[12] Towards the end of the Umayyad period, justice as documented in Fayyum seems to have been administered by pagarchs (or deputy governors), now Muslims, bearing the title of *amir* in Coptic literature. Their own deputies may also have dispensed justice at a lower level.[13]

There is little doubt that Muslim judges existed in the provincial capitals of the Umayyad Empire. Did they actually bear the title *qadi* that literary tradition later assigned to them? Fred Donner hypothesizes that this title was created during a process of 'qurʾanicization' of politico-religious vocabulary, which occurred in the course of the second/eighth century.[14] This assumption is plausible; however, we can hardly conclude that the function did not exist before that time. Arabic papyri rarely use formal titles during the Umayyad period; for example, Qurra b. Sharik is never referred to as 'governor' in his Arabic letters, while his title is mentioned in Greek and Coptic ones.[15] If the title of *qadi* is a late one, as Donner assumes, its invention suggests an important redefinition of the judge's role and position in the governmental sphere.

In provincial capitals, Muslim judges (for convenience, we will continue calling them *qadi*s) were usually appointed by governors, who entrusted them with daily judicial administration.[16] They had jurisdiction over all disputes brought before them by litigants, whether civil or criminal. However, because any trial before a *qadi* required a plaintiff and a defendant, 'criminal' justice (homicide in particular) probably fell already under the scope of institutions able to carry out investigations, such as the police (*shurta*).

Joseph Schacht sees these *qadi*s as legal 'secretaries' of the governors.[17] It seems clear, as we shall see later, that Umayyad governors were considered as the higher judicial authority within their provinces, and that *qadi*s were only acting as their deputies. The term 'secretary' may nevertheless minimize their role, for it suggests that every new governor, when appointed, designated his personal legal representative. This is not what usually happened. In Egypt, al-Kindi's book on judges shows that some *qadi*s of Fustat retained their positions during the tenure of several governors. This in some cases required an explicit 'confirmation' from the incoming governor.[18] Yet, *qadi*ship already appeared as a separate institution, and its holders were likely to remain in office when the governor was dismissed.[19]

The caliph usually appointed directly the *qadi* of Damascus, but not those of other cities.[20] The situation may have changed in the second half of the Umayyad period, for al-Kindi states that several *qadi*s of Fustat were appointed by caliphs ʿUmar II (r. 717–20 CE) and Hisham (r. 724–43 CE).[21] However, this information contrasts with Wakiʿ's reports about the Hijaz and Iraq, where no appointment by a caliph appears during the same period.[22] Furthermore, Steven Judd notes that caliphal selection of Egyptian *qadi*s actually happened in an indirect manner, with the governor as an intermediary.[23] The interventions of some Umayyad caliphs in Fustat's judgeship were therefore not equivalent to the direct appointments that developed under the Abbasids, and were limited to a short period.

Umayyad *qadi*s received a monthly salary (*rizq*) from the government: between 10 and 16 dinars in Fustat, and about 100 dirhams in Iraq.[24] However, they were not professional judges. Although some were appointed twice, such as ʿAbd Allah b. ʿAbd al-Rahman b. Hujayra in Egypt,[25] they could not expect to stay long in office. On average, *qadi*s remained in office for four years in Fustat, and for three and a half years in Basra and Kufa. Many were dismissed after a few months, and less than a third managed to stay in office for five years or more.

The few data available on their careers show, to a certain extent, the diversity of their profiles. In Egypt, two *qadi*s from the early Marwanid period also exercised military functions, before or after their time in office.[26] Others followed careers as civil administrators (as head of taxes administration,[27] of the public granary,[28] of the military *diwan*[29] or of the chancery[30]) or military ones (police chief,[31] admiral in the navy[32]). Only one, towards the end of the Umayyad period, had already got a foothold in judicial administration, as a scribe, before becoming a *qadi*.[33] Yet, he also pursued private (oil trade) and public (chancery) activities.[34] In Medina, the only two *qadi*s on whose careers we are informed were thereafter appointed governors of the city (under Ibn al-Zubayr and ʿUmar II).[35] In Basra, only one *qadi*, Iyas b. Muʿawiya, is reported to have held another position in civil administration, as market inspector of Wasit.[36] Some *qadi*s of Kufa followed a similar career, holding positions in tax administration (or as market inspector),[37] as head of the public treasury[38] or as

keeper of the seal (*khatam*) at the governor's chancery.[39] Only one of them, at the end of the Umayyad period, had had prior judicial experience, as a *qadi*'s assistant (*ʿawn*).[40] Finally, a certain number of Damascus' *qadi*s also served in the army or were subsequently appointed as city governors.[41] One of them was also employed as head manager of the great mosque.[42] This limited information suggests that many *qadi*s of the Umayyad period were recruited within the circles of military or civilian administrators. It is, however, impossible to say in what proportions.

Some Umayyad *qadi*s combined simultaneously judgeship and another governmental position. In this regard, Egypt contrasts with other provinces: Nearly half of Fustat judges benefited from such multiple offices. From 679–80 CE to 708 CE, a majority of Egyptian *qadi*s were also police chiefs (*sahib al-shurta*), which made the *qadi* the second in command after the governor, and potentially his deputy in his absence.[43] Many were also official preachers (*qass*),[44] and two were placed at the head of the public treasury (*bayt al-mal*).[45] The combination of judgeship and the position of police chief appears as an Egyptian specificity. The only other example during the Umayyad period can be found in Medina during the AH 50s/670s CE.[46] Almost no cases of cumulative offices can be traced in Iraq. The only exceptions are two *qadi*s who were also governors of Basra, the first one under caliph ʿAbd al-Malik,[47] and the second one during the AH 110s/730s CE.[48] Cumulative offices are also rare in Damascus, where we can only find Fadala b. ʿUbayd Allah, who served as deputy of Muʿawiya (r. 661–80 CE) in his absence.[49] Steven Judd suggests that such regional differences could be an illusion coming from the sources, for al-Kindi pays more attention than other authors do to these administrative details.[50] However, insofar as Wakiʿ also mentions several cases of multiple offices, Judd's assumption seems fragile. It is more likely that a judge's position was understood differently in each province. Several cities associated judgeship with military functions more easily, and favoured recruitment within administrative circles (Egypt, perhaps Syria), while others selected most of their *qadi*s within scholarly circles (Iraq).

COURTS

During the Umayyad period, a majority of litigants were non-Muslims, and a large proportion of disputes were certainly solved by communal institutions. Alongside dukes and pagarchs, who dispensed justice in Egypt under the theoretical supervision of Muslim authorities, religious courts played a major role in dispute resolution. In Iraq and Palestine, rabbinical courts composed of at least three judges treated disputes between Jews. Among Christians, the judicial system was under the supreme authority of the patriarchs of the various churches, and different levels of the ecclesiastical hierarchy held hearing sessions.[51] Muslim courts soon began to attract non-Muslims, for their judges' decisions probably appeared as more binding than those of communal courts.[52] However, they could only be found in provincial capitals, far away from towns and villages where the majority of disputes broke out.

The first Umayyad *qadi*s' practice may have followed more of an imperial model than a Muslim one. Controversies between scholars of the first half of the eighth century suggest that, contrary to what is generally believed, mosques were not considered a judicial space at first.[53] In Kufa, the mosque did not become the main place of hearings before the late 710s or early 720s. At the same time, some *qadi*s

of Basra dispensed justice in the market, or on the *rahaba* (the central square next to the mosque). The case of Damascus (and to a lesser extent of Medina) is even more significant: until the first decades of the Abbasid era, *qadi*s held hearings on the *rahaba*, or near the mosque's gates, but not inside the mosque.[54] These choices reveal the openness of early *qadi*s' courts. Their justice was for all the people, irrespective of their faith. This openness was nevertheless gradually challenged by scholars, who increasingly saw *qadi*ship as a specifically Muslim institution. Towards the end of the Umayyad period, *qadi*s sat more and more inside the mosque. The admission of non-Muslims at their hearings was no longer accepted by everyone. In Fustat, one of the first options was to organize a 'mixed' tribunal: around 738 CE, Khayr b. Nuʿaym received Muslim litigants inside the mosque, and *dhimmi*s outside, on the front steps.[55] A growing number of jurists held that non-Muslims should be referred to their communal courts whenever their disputes did not involve any Muslim.[56] The displacement of court hearings into the interior of the mosque, completed under the Abbasids (although some Muslim jurists resisted the idea that justice should be dispensed in the mosque), bears witness to the progressive 'Islamization' of the judicial system. Moving away from its early universal vocation,[57] which matched the ideology of the Umayyad imperial government, it depended more and more on Islamic law as shaped by Muslim private scholars.

The *qadi* of the Abbasid period was not only a judge, but also a property manager who exercised guardianship over minors, prodigal and legally incapable people, controlled pious endowments, and so on.[58] However, sources have little to say about this aspect of the institution during the Umayyad period. According to the image they convey, the judges' main task was actually to resolve legal disputes. In the 690s, Fustat's *qadi* ʿAbd al-Rahman b. Hujayra could make public some people's prodigality, but he did not declare them legally incompetent nor did he manage their properties.[59] The first traces of such actions appear during the 730s.[60] Moreover, it was only in the first decade of the eighth century that a *qadi* began overseeing the orphans' properties through tribal *ʿarif*s.[61] *Qadi*s' guardianship over orphans was reinforced some time later by order of caliph ʿUmar II.[62] In the 730s, the *qadi* of Fustat began supervising pious endowments (*hubs*): al-Kindi explicitly says that Tawba b. Namir was the first to do so.[63] As for Iraqi *qadi*s, Wakiʿ does not mention any of their administrative tasks during the Umayyad period. These apparently developed at a later stage: in Basra, under caliph al-Mansur, *qadi* Sawwar b. ʿAbd Allah was the first who 'strengthened the office of *qadi*' by supervising pious endowments (*waqf*s).[64]

Judiciary staff appeared limited in number. Except for dubious information about Shurayh, a semi-legendary *qadi* from the early decades of Islam, auxiliary judicial functions do not appear in Kufa before the 720s,[65] when a herald (*munadi*) and undefined assistants (*aʿwan*) are first mentioned.[66] Only under the last Umayyad did a guard (*haras*) appear in this city, whose mission was to punish litigants found guilty of contempt of court,[67] as well as scribes recording the testimonies produced before the *qadi*.[68] In Basra, a judiciary staff appears in the late 710s, with a scribe and a guard.[69] A few mentions of a 'chamberlain' (*adhin*) appear only about Bilal b. Abi Burda, whose judgeship overlapped his time as city governor and police chief.[70] In Medina, the sources only allude to guards carrying whips, from the turn of the eighth century.[71] Even in Fustat, on the administration of which we are better informed, the only staff mentioned alongside *qadi*s consists of scribes, attested to for the first time

around AH 97/716 CE.[72] Under the Marwanids, each *qadi* had apparently a single scribe.[73] Contrary to Hallaq's assumption, nothing indicates that the *qadi*s of Fustat had a court sheriff before Abbasid times.[74]

Literary sources thus offer contrasting images of courts between one province and another. The judgeship of Medina was apparently more 'armed' than others, owing to the presence of a guard standing next to the *qadi* – an image shared, to a lesser extent, with Basra. Conversely, court security forces seem absent in Fustat – even though many of its first *qadi*s were also police chiefs – whereas the bureaucratic organization seems higher there than elsewhere, perhaps because of the administrative tasks that began to fall on Fustati *qadi*s early on. At any rate, the creation of a 'tribunal' including diversified staff who assisted the *qadi* in his judicial and administrative duties was a slow process. There are no reliable textual indications suggesting that, until the 700s or 710s, *qadi*s had any employees at their disposal. In the early eighth century, judicial auxiliaries were still few in number. A *qadi* could mainly count on a secretary, and sometimes on a guard responsible for maintaining court order.

It is indeed doubtful that Umayyad courts were ever highly bureaucratized. *Qadi*s certainly resorted to writing and preserving documents at home – at least from the 700s in Fustat.[75] However, al-Kindi does not allude to actual 'archives' (*diwan*) before 736 CE.[76] Al-Kindi and Waki' state unanimously that judgeship experienced an authentic bureaucratic shift during the early decades of the Abbasid period, in Iraq as well as in Egypt: from then on, *qadi*s developed systematic recording of documents and extensive archival practices that did not exist under the Umayyads.[77]

PROCEDURES

The Umayyad period was a time of experimentations and debates, before court procedures were stabilized within the framework of the classical legal schools of the Abbasid period. Some structures were in place at an early stage: the *qadi* was a single judge, whose role was to preside over an accusatorial process. He waited to be seized by litigants and did not act ex-officio. He based his judgment on evidence that, as in later Islamic law, primarily included confession, testimony and oath. However, the use of such evidence was the subject of discussions and experiments that give Umayyad judicial practices an archaic flavour.[78]

Proofs were not systematically distributed between litigants according to their role (that is, plaintiff or defendant). In classical Islamic law, the procedure follows the maxim 'the double testimonial evidence (*bayyina*) lies upon the one who makes the allegation, and the oath (*yamin*) belongs to him who denies'. At the beginning of Marwanid times, however, any litigant could bring witnesses to support his statement. Moreover, testimony was not limited to the two honourable witnesses of the classical *bayyina*. In Kufa, Basra and Fustat, the testimony of a single witness could have evidential value. In cities such as Basra, Medina, Damascus and Fustat, the party that produced more witnesses than his adversary was likely to win the case. Accordingly, an equal number of witnesses might block the procedure. One of the first questions asked by Muslims at the turn of the eighth century was, therefore, how to manage problems caused by the overabundance of testimonies.[79] Different solutions were proposed. In Medina and Fustat, the winner of a trial could be determined by drawing

lots. In Kufa, however, and perhaps also in Damascus, presumptions (especially the possession of the disputed object) were taken into consideration at an early stage.

Testimonial practices underwent important changes in the first half of the eighth century. From the 700s or the 710s, double testimony appeared as the ideal proof, *bayyina*. The restrictive use of this type of evidence might have first developed in Kufa, then spread throughout the Muslim East. At the same time, a form of evidence combining testimony and oath begins to be mentioned in the sources: the *al-yamin maʿa l-shahid* procedure, which allowed a claimant to complete the testimony of a single witness with an oath. This method, which had perhaps appeared in Medina in the second half of the seventh century, was adopted in Basra, Damascus and Fustat.[80] However, except in Medina, this procedure may have been admitted only for a transitional period. It was abandoned in Damascus as well as in Basra by the end of the Umayyad period or during the early Abbasid. It survived some time in Fustat, but was only accepted in the Medinese school and its heirs (the Maliki and Shafiʿi schools, and later the Ismaʿili and Imami legal doctrines).

The oath was used in different ways. In Marwanid Kufa, a claimant was sometimes required to take an oath after he had produced a witness. An oath could also be administered to both the plaintiff and the defendant. Some Basran *qadi*s demanded that the witnesses swear they were telling the truth. The double oath of the plaintiff and the defendant was also accepted in Basra. The results of this procedure were unconvincing, however, and in Basra as in Medina, the oath tended to be confined to the defendant. A tentative rationalization occurred in Kufa, during the second quarter of the eighth century. First, the claimant had to produce the *bayyina*, while the defendant was invited to take an oath. Second, these two kinds of evidence were not of equal value: The *bayyina* outweighed the oath. This procedure was assimilated, in Kufa, to 'David's judgment', and called *fasl al-khitab* (literally 'termination of the discourse'), an expression that is associated in the Qurʾan with the justice of this prophet.

This procedure, which restricted the role of the *qadi* to reviewing legal evidence provided by litigants, was unanimously adopted by the classical legal schools. It contrasted another perception of justice, especially popular in Basra during the early eighth century. Several *qadi*s, including the famous Iyas b. Muʿawiya under caliph ʿUmar II, earned their reputation by looking for material clues. This inquisitorial procedure was based on a specific method, called *firasa*. The term originally evoked physiognomy as practiced among pre-Islamic Arabs. In the judicial field, it pointed more generally to a *qadi*'s ability to infer truth from circumstantial evidence. In Basra, this method was associated with another Qurʾanic concept: that of *fahm*, or 'discernment', associated with the figure of Solomon. This Solomonic procedure put the *qadi* in the position of a real investigator. Maybe because it could not apply to any type of case, or because it might drift towards a more arbitrary kind of justice, it was eventually abandoned in favour of 'David's judgment'.

Documentary evidence was abandoned early. Towards the end of the Umayyad period, al-Zuhri (d. 742 CE) still remembered a bygone era when documents could be used as evidence in their own right. Recording the testimony of disappeared persons, they replaced somehow their spoken word and perpetuated it beyond death.[81] A few reports suggest that written documents had a probative value in the eyes of early *qadi*s, especially in Iraq. As early as the 710s at the latest, documents could nevertheless no

longer be used as full evidence. They were thenceforth to be confirmed by other legal means: first by an oath, and, increasingly, by the oral testimony of witnesses.

These changes can usually not be dated accurately. What is noticeable, however, is that the Umayyad period was that of an experimental construction of judgeship, along lines that cross regional entities. The disqualification of documentary evidence seems one of the most ancient features of the Islamic legal system, which obliged *qadi*s to refocus the search for judicial truth on witnesses and oaths. For a long time, procedures remained fluctuating from one city to another, and kept changing according to debates between scholars who looked for the best way to distinguish right from wrong. In the second half of the Marwanid period, Kufa seems to have played a prominent role in the rationalization of these methods and the development of the classical accusatorial procedure. This discursive dynamic was also characterized by a progressive alignment of the proof system with a Qurʾanic rhetoric that placed the judicial process under the aegis of two main prophetic models of justice, those of Solomon and David. These two characters were not only religious referents, though. They were, also, kings and models of government. Indeed, the construction of the legal system depended to a large extent on Umayyad caliphal policy.

JUSTICE AND UMAYYAD GOVERNMENT

Governors were at the top of the provincial judicial hierarchy and had judicial powers themselves. In early Umayyad Iraq, general literary sources – that is, not focused on *qadi*s – present governor Ziyad b. Abihi as the main judge of the province.[82] Governors are mainly pictured as deciding major cases, involving other government officials[83] or related to criminal justice,[84] but daily disputes between individuals were also brought before them.[85] In the early eighth century, a governor of Basra complained that, although he had appointed a judge, many litigants still appealed to his justice and waited at his door.[86] In the *Ansab al-ashraf*'s volumes devoted to the Umayyad period, most cited trials were conducted before a governor.[87]

Under the Sufyanids, extant papyrological documentation does not say to what extent the Egyptian governor intervened outside Fustat. In the dossier of Papas, pagarch of Edfu under Muʿawiya, the duke of Thebaid appears as the principal judicial authority. The situation is different under the Marwanids. In his letters to Basilios, pagarch of Ishquh/Aphrodito, governor Qurra b. Sharik claimed to have an effective judicial authority. He was solicited by Christian litigants through a procedure that probably prolonged Byzantine practices, and regularly sent rescripts to pagarchs, ordering them to hear their complaints. The governor indicated that evidence (*bayyina*) needed to be produced by claimants, and specified conditional judgements to be given by pagarchs.[88]

At the top level, Umayyad caliphs also exercised judicial power. In narrative sources, they mainly appear in cases of offenses against state security by heretics or rebels.[89] However, caliphal justice went beyond these exceptional cases. Muʿawiya sat every morning in the mosque, turning his back to the *maqsura*, sitting on a chair or throne (*kursi*) and surrounded by guards, and received complaints of the weak and oppressed people. He judged some of these disputes himself and referred other ones to deputy judges.[90] The sources also keep track of the judicial activity of several Marwanid caliphs, including ʿAbd al-Malik,[91] al-Walid I (r. 705–15 CE),[92] ʿUmar II

(r. 717–20 CE), of course,[93] and Yazid b. ʿAbd al-Malik (r. 720–24 CE).[94] Al-Baladhuri describes ʿUmar II as presiding over a court that later historiography assimilated to *mazalim* – the 'injustices' or 'spoliations' that, by synecdoche, came to designate a specific court for redress of grievances.[95]

Umayyad caliphs played an important part in the shaping of procedures. Marwan b. al-Hakam's position regarding the testimony of underage boys, the oath and the *qasama* (collective oath in homicide cases) served as a reference,[96] as well as ʿAbd al-Malik's practice in talion cases.[97] Moreover, as his governors wrote to their pagarchs, the caliph sent judicial rescripts to his judges, with instructions regarding procedures, legal rules and sometimes conditional judgements. The first traces of caliphal rescripts appear with ʿAbd Allah b. al-Zubayr's letters to *qadi*s of Kufa, during the second *fitna*.[98] Until the end of the Umayyad period at least, caliphs continued shaping procedures by sending rescripts. Sources preserve examples regarding ʿAbd al-Malik,[99] al-Walid,[100] Sulayman,[101] Umar II,[102] Yazid II,[103] Hisham[104] and Marwan II.[105] Syriac sources also emphasize the role of Yazid II in establishing penalties and procedures.[106]

These interventions occurred either after a litigant had complained before the caliph,[107] or in response to requests sent by the judges themselves. The example of ʿUmar II, whose judicial instructions are best documented, suggests that the addressees of these rescripts were mainly governors, either to guide them in the context of a trial they presided over,[108] or to forward their instructions to their *qadi*s. Caliphal rescripts were sent to various provinces, where they may have been made public; in this way, they probably contributed to the harmonization of legal procedures at an imperial scale. For instance, ʿUmar II's letters may have played a major role in the promotion of a legal system based on a strict repartition of proofs between litigants – double testimony produced by the plaintiff, oath taken by the defendant.[109]

Caliphal jurisprudence was not, however, the only driving force in the formation of judicial procedures. The word of the sovereign, even if it appeared as authoritative to many Muslims, was integrated into discussions between scholars. Some of these distanced themselves from caliphal opinions, and dialogic interactions between jurists and *qadi*s, within each province or across the Islamic world, played a major role in shaping the classical model of judicial organization.

The central position of governors in judicial administration is symptomatic of a deep connection between justice and political power under the Umayyads. *Qadi*s could be dismissed at any time, which happened whenever their judicial practice did not please the ruler. In everyday life, they certainly enjoyed a certain latitude to decide on litigations. However, unlike what Judd argues,[110] a *qadi* was not independent, neither in theory nor in practice. The rules he was asked to apply were partly issued by the political power, and he could be subjected to the delegating authority's direct intervention whenever a lawsuit threatened the latter's interests.

CONCLUSION

Umayyad *qadi*s were only one category of actors in a multifaceted imperial legal system. Traditional judicial authorities inherited by the Arab-Muslim conquerors probably dealt with a majority of trials. Rabbinical and ecclesiastical courts were

still recognized, as they had been under the Byzantines and the Sassanids. In Sufyanid Egypt, justice was largely in the hands of pagarchs, who were themselves under the authority of dukes. The role of the latter vanished during the early eighth century, to the benefit of the provincial governor. In his correspondence, Qurra b. Sharik appears as the main guarantor of justice. *Qadi*s (for want of another term) were certainly appointed after the conquests to dispense justice in garrison-cities that soon became provincial capitals. They were acting on the authority of governors, who were themselves appointed by the caliph. In practice, this system was administered in a decentralized manner. Most of the time, governors freely designated their *qadi*s, and until the first half of the eighth century, pagarchs were drawn from local elites inherited from Byzantium. Nevertheless, each level of the administrative structure had theoretical authority on the lower one. The main expression of this authority was rescripts sent to lower courts, carrying instructions about procedures and legal rules that applied to specific cases. The caliph appeared as the supreme judicial authority, who could prescribe the law and send instructions to his governors and their *qadi*s.

The *qadi*'s as well as the pagarch's offices were part of an imperial judicial system that was not primarily a religious one. In the early eighth century, governor Qurra b. Sharik tried to provide his Christian pagarchs' courts with a Qurʾanic framework of reference by requiring them to rely on a *bayyina*, a Qurʾanic term for 'evidence'. However, it took another decade or two before these pagarchs were replaced by Muslim ones. *Qadi*s were certainly Muslims, but several clues suggest that their hearings were not specifically designed for their co-religionists, for they were held for a long time in the open air, outside mosques. It was only towards the end of the Umayyad period that the mosques emerged as a privileged setting for the *qadi*s' courts. By then, the rules *qadi*s applied were definitely based on Islamic principles, considered as such because they derived from the Qurʾan or the reflection of pious Muslims. Nevertheless, Islamic law was still in its empirical infancy, and its implementation was subject to experimentations, in particular with regard to the procedures.

The formation of legal procedures followed different dynamics. These resulted, to a large extent, from discursive interactions between Muslims themselves. *Qadi*s and scholars from various cities debated the best strategies to discriminate between the truth and falsehood in disputes between individuals. To these interactions, which took place between scholars of the same town, of neighbouring cities or of adjacent provinces, was added the voice of higher political authorities, that of the caliphs and probably of governors. These exchanges contributed to the harmonization of judicial practices and gave birth, at the beginning of the Abbasid period, to a lasting model of Islamic judgeship.

The impact of local traditions and ancient non-Muslim cultures on the formation of Islamic judgeship still needs to be assessed. Surviving sources, however, do not allow for a precise reconstruction of *qadi*s' justice during the first decades of Islam. Because of the historical mist covering Islamic judgeship until around 700, a satisfactory explanation of the relationship between the conqueror's system and those of the Byzantines, Sasanians and pre-Islamic Arabs cannot be given. As observed for Marwanid times, Islamic judgeship shows commonalities and differences with both imperial systems, and no neat regional distinction can be found. However, it can easily be distinguished from pre-Islamic Arabian practices as they appear in later Islamic reports. Finally, it seems that some judicial experimentations of the Umayyad

period can be explained by interactions between Muslim and non-Muslim courts. Some of these already had strong theoretical foundations before Islam (as the Jews), while others developed their legal theory at the same time as Muslims (East-Syrian and West-Syrian churches).[111]

The last two decades of the Umayyad period were characterized by the emergence of a model of judgeship that could be more easily identified as Muslim, and whose functioning was better regulated by the emerging Islamic law. Judicial practices were still far from being fully harmonized, as evidenced by Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ's *Risala fi l-sahaba*.[112] Nevertheless, the evolution that started under the Umayyads was confirmed under the Abbasids, with caliph al-Mansur strengthening the judiciary by detaching it from governors and placing it under his direct authority.[113] At about the same time, the emergence of a written legal literature in circles of jurists (Maliki and Hanafi) promoted by the Abbasids completed the transformation of qadiship into a leading religious institution.

NOTES

1 Al-Tabari 1885–89: III/1, 398.
2 Tyan 1960.
3 Brunschvig 1976; Schacht 1964.
4 Hallaq 2005.
5 Judd 2014a.
6 Melchert 2008.
7 Tillier 2009: 68–9.
8 The expression 'proto-*qadi*' was first used by Hallaq (2005: 34).
9 *P.MuslimState* 26. Papyrological abbreviations follow the *Checklist of Arabic Documents*: www.naher-osten.lmu.de/isapchecklist.
10 Tillier 2013: 20.
11 Tillier 2013: 21–2.
12 *P.Mird* 18, 19, 20.
13 Sijpesteijn 2013: 133.
14 Donner 2011: 86.
15 See the series of papyri *P.Lond.* IV in Bell 1911–28.
16 Judd 2014a: 131.
17 Schacht 1964: 25.
18 Al-Kindi 1912: 311, 313, 325.
19 It does not mean that the office of *qadi* was much more stable than that of governor – 26 governors were appointed between 40/661 and 132/750, against 23 *qadi*s during the same period. For a contrary view, see Judd 2014a: 100.
20 Judd 2014a: 100.
21 Khoury 1986: 15. Compare Johansen 1997: 985, 992.
22 Tillier 2014: 177.
23 Judd 2014a: 116.
24 Al-Qadi 2009: 28.
25 Al-Kindi 2012: 26.
26 Al-Kindi 1912 : 321, 326.
27 Ibn Taghri Birdi 1929–72: I, 92.
28 Al-Kindi 1912: 333.
29 Al-Kindi 1912: 354.

30 Al-Kindi 1912: 356.
31 Al-Kindi 1912: 324.
32 Al-Kindi 1912: 39 (ʿAbis b. Saʿid).
33 Tillier 2011: 398.
34 Al-Kindi 1912: 352, 356.
35 Wakiʿ 1947–50: I, 124, 148.
36 Wakiʿ 1947–50: II, 353.
37 Wakiʿ 1947–50: II, 406; Ibn Saʿd 1968, V: 58.
38 Wakiʿ 1947–50: II, 410.
39 Wakiʿ 1947–50: III, 11.
40 Wakiʿ 1947–50: III, 22.
41 Fadala b. ʿUbayd, admiral of the Egyptian navy under Muʿawiya (Ibn ʿAsakir 1995: XLVIII, 296); al-Nuʿman b. Bashir, governor of Kufa, then Hims, under Muʿawiya (Ibn ʿAsakir 1995: LXII, 111, 114); Bilal b. Abi l-Dardaʾ (Ibn ʿAsakir 1995: X, 523); Numayr b. Aws, governor of Adharbaijan (Ibn ʿAsakir 1995: LXII, 225).
42 Ibn Tulun 1956: 5.
43 al-Kindi 1912: 311, 313, 322, 323, 324, 325, 327.
44 Al-Kindi 1912: 303, 310 (Sulaym b. ʿItr), 315 (ʿAbd al-Rahman b. Hujayra), 348 (Khayr b. Nuʿaym); Ibn Hajar 1998: 217 (ʿAbd al-Rahman b. Salim), 322 (Malik b. Sharahil).
45 Al-Kindi 1912: 317 (ʿAbd al-Rahman b. Hujayra), 332 (ʿAbd Allah b. ʿAbd al-Rahman b. Hujayra).
46 Wakiʿ 1947–50: I, 118.
47 Wakiʿ 1947–50: I, 302.
48 Al-Tabari 1885–89: II/3, 1593 (Bilal b. Abi Burda).
49 Ibn ʿAsakir 1995: XLVIII, 290.
50 Judd 2014a: 136.
51 These courts will not be discussed in the present chapter. See Tillier 2017: 455–533.
52 Simonsohn 2011: chap. 5–6.
53 Ibn Abi Shayba 2004: III, 619–20; VII, 485.
54 Tillier 2017: 182–92.
55 Al-Kindi 1912: 351. Compare Tillier 2017: 192–3.
56 See ʿAbd al-Razzaq 1983: X, 321–2; Fattal 2004: 91–4.
57 Donner 2010: 203–4; Hoyland, *Seeing Islam*, 555–6.
58 Tyan 1960: 359ff.
59 Al-Kindi 1912: 319.
60 Al-Kindi 1912: 347.
61 Al-Kindi 1912: 325.
62 Al-Kindi 1912: 339.
63 Al-Kindi 1912: 346.
64 Wakiʿ 1947–50: II, 58.
65 Steven Judd (2014a: 132) suggests that around 700, *qadi* Abu Burda b. Abi Musa employed Saʿid b. Jubayr as a scribe. However, sources simply report that governor al-Hajjaj b. Yusuf 'had him sit in audience' with Abu Burda. The exact role of this character therefore remains unknown. Perhaps he was advisor to the *qadi*, or a form of bicephalous judgeship may have been experimented (compare Tillier 2009: 281–4). See Wakiʿ 1947–50: II, 407, 411; Ibn ʿAsakir 1995: XXVI, 56.
66 Wakiʿ 1947–50: III, 20, 22.
67 Wakiʿ 1947–50: III, 130–1.
68 Wakiʿ 1947–50: III, 136.
69 Previous mentions of a guard are related to a '*qadi*' who was first and foremost a governor, Abu Musa al-Ashʿari. Wakiʿ 1947–50: I, 285–86. See Wakiʿ 1947–50: I, 318, 336; II, 8.

70 Wakiʿ 1947–50: II, 37, 41.
71 Wakiʿ 1947–50: I, 145, 158, 173.
72 Ibn Hajar 1998: 215. See a list of these scribes in Tillier 2011.
73 Al-Kindi (1912: 340) mentions 'Yahya b. Maymun's scribes. However, this *qadi* stayed in office for more than eight years, and he probably changed scribe during this period.
74 See al-Kindi 1912: 460. Compare Hallaq 2005: 60.
75 Al-Kindi 1912: 325.
76 Al-Kindi 1912: 346.
77 Wakiʿ 1947–50: II, 58; al-Kindi 1912: 379. Compare Ibn Hajar 1998: 438.
78 The following developments synthesize the conclusions of Chapter 3 of Tillier 2017.
79 ʿAbd al-Razzaq 1983: VIII, 277–8.
80 For a different opinion, see Melchert 2008: 325.
81 ʿAbd al-Razzaq 1983: VIII, 354–5.
82 Al-Baladhuri 2008: IVa: 205, 205–6; al-Baladhuri 1996: XI, 115.
83 Al-Baladhuri 2008: II, 614, 617–18; IVa, 132–3.
84 Al-Baladhuri 1996: VIII, 158; IX, 250.
85 Al-Baladhuri 1996: IX, 360.
86 Al-Baladhuri 1996: VIII, 206.
87 Research carried out on the database *al-Maktaba al-shamila* (version 3.48) on 16 April 2013, by a systematic search of the verbs *khasama*, *takhasama*, *ikhtasama*, *nazaʿa*, *tanazaʿa*.
88 Tillier 2015: 145–6.
89 Judd 2014b: 54.
90 Al-Masʿudi 1970: III, 220–1; al-Baladhuri 2008: IVa: 109, 283; V, 275–6; al-Baladhuri 1996: VII, 405. See also Crone and Hinds 1986: 44.
91 ʿAbd al-Razzaq 1983: VI, 251, 286, 499, 519; 9: 146, 188.
92 ʿAbd al-Razzaq 1983: V, 307; 10: 161; al-Baladhuri 2008: III, 77–8.
93 Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1966: 102–3, 129–30.
94 ʿAbd al-Razzaq 1983: X, 45, 240.
95 Al-Baladhuri 1996: VII, 173, 191.
96 ʿAbd al-Razzaq 1983: VIII, 279, 337, 351; X, 36; Ibn Hazm 1352 AH: IX, 421; Malik b. Anas 1991: III, 290. Compare Schacht 1950: 193.
97 Malik b. Anas 1997: II, 444.
98 Wakiʿ 1947–50: II, 321, 404, 405. For more details, see Tillier 2014: 160.
99 ʿAbd al-Razzaq 1983: III, 326; VIII, 411; X, 282; Wakiʿ 1947–50: II, 267.
100 Ibn ʿAsakir 1995: LIII, 164–5.
101 Al-Baladhuri 1996: VIII, 150.
102 Tillier 2014: 168–70.
103 Wakiʿ 1947–50: I, 142, 160.
104 Al-Baladhuri 1996: VIII, 425; Wakiʿ 1947–50: III, 205; al-Kindi 1912: 348.
105 Al-Baladhuri 1996: IX, 250.
106 He is supposed to have determined that blood-money for a Christian was half that of a Muslim. Regarding procedures, it is said that he forbade the testimony of a Christian against a Muslim. Chabot 1895: 20 (Syriac)/18 (French). Michael the Syrian attributes this last ruling to caliph ʿUmar II. Michel le Syrien 1899–1910: II, 489.
107 See for example Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1996: 53–4.
108 See al-Tabari 1885–89: II/3, 1364–5.
109 Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1966: 55.
110 Judd 2014a: 102.
111 See Tillier 2017: chap. 6.
112 Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ 1976: 42–3. See Tillier 2009: 92–5.
113 Tillier 2009: 101–2.

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CHAPTER NINE

AL-AWZAʿI AND THE UMAYYAD INFLUENCE ON ISLAMIC LEGAL DEVELOPMENT

Steven Judd

INTRODUCTION

Islamic legal development during the Umayyad period is often overlooked in modern studies of Islamic law. While modern scholars generally reject the notion that Islamic law was fully formed during the time of the Prophet and the Rashidun ('Rightly-Guided Caliphs'), and acknowledge that at least some elements of Islamic law had to have emerged during the Umayyad period, they still minimize the role the Umayyads played in formulating Islamic law. This is due to a variety of factors, including the paucity of early sources, the unsavory image of the Umayyads in later works, medieval and modern assumptions about the chronology of Islamic legal development, and the privileging of later schools of legal thought, or *madhhab*s, especially those 'classical' Islamic legal schools that survive until modern times.

Joseph Schacht's (d. 1969) foundational work on early Islamic law is typical, as well as prototypical, in this regard. Schacht concluded that the Umayyads were interested primarily in administrative practice, particularly warfare, taxation, and division of spoils.[1] He proposed that there was a 'considerable body of common doctrine' that included much Umayyad administrative practice, which was Islamized largely in scholarly centers in Iraq, outside the immediate reach of the caliphs in Damascus.[2] He saw little Umayyad influence on non-administrative aspects of Islamic legal development.

Schacht's conclusions have, of course, continued to influence more recent scholarship on the development of Islamic law. This approach leaves little room for active Umayyad participation in the development of Islamic law in their vast empire. It portrays the Umayyad regime as concerned only with legal regulation of the actions of the state in areas of warfare, spoils, and taxation, along with the responsibilities of those who worked for or interacted with the state. In some ways, this circumscribed understanding of the role of the Umayyads and their allies in legal matters reflects modern notions of legitimate functions of government and the limited influence modern states exert over more strictly religious areas of life.

However, Islamic law is widely understood to encompass far more than modern state functions. Indeed, classical Islamic law in its fully articulated versions covers

everything from personal hygiene and ritual practice to criminal law and political legitimacy. By focusing almost exclusively on administrative practice, Schacht and others have created and perpetuated the impression that the Umayyads had little interest in other aspects of Islamic legal development. Instead, most aspects of Islamic law are relegated to the realm of vaguely specified common ancient doctrine, largely ignored by the Umayyads, only to be fully articulated, parsed, and dissected by scholars in the early Abbasid era, predominantly in Iraqi intellectual centers like Kufa and later Baghdad.[3]

This narrow view of Umayyad law also reflects the limitations of the sources upon which Schacht and others have relied. Sources for Islamic law, or any topic, during the Umayyad period are extremely sparse. Virtually no legal texts from the era have survived, even in fragmentary form. Consequently, we must rely primarily on later works that preserve traces of earlier Umayyad scholars' approaches. However, further exploration of these sources can reveal traces of Umayyad-era influence on broader aspects of legal development. Some Umayyad legal authorities do stand out for their contributions to later texts, perhaps above all, ʿAbd al-Rahman b. ʿAmr al-Awzaʿi (d. AH 157/774 CE).

ʿAbd al-Rahman b. ʿAmr al-Awzaʿi – hereafter, al-Awzaʿi – was closely associated with the Umayyad caliphate and retained his reputation despite the demise of the dynasty.[4] Ironically, given the arguments made below, the small portion of his work that survives contributes to a narrow view of Umayyad-era Islamic law. His *Kitab al-Siyar* ('Book of Military Expeditions'), preserved in fragments in later works, deals exclusively with the kinds of issues Schacht and others label as administrative practice. However, at the very least, a closer inspection of al-Awzaʿi's views on broader topics confirms that the Umayyads' interests were not limited to administration and that prominent Umayyad-era scholars shaped early Islamic discourse more than has been assumed. While this examination does not permit a complete reconstruction of Umayyad-era Islamic law, it does offer a glimpse of the issues that mattered to the Umayyads and to al-Awzaʿi himself. It begins with a survey of the concerns of al-Awzaʿi's fragmentary extant works, and then examines how his interests are reflected in the views attributed to him by later scholars, and especially the work of the eleventh-century Andalusi, Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr.

AL-AWZAʿI AND HIS WORKS

Al-Awzaʿi was a Syrian jurist who spent much of his time in Damascus before retiring to Beirut, where he died in AH 157/774 CE. He overcame obscure origins to become a respected legal scholar at a young age, answering legal queries already when he was 25 years old. As I have argued elsewhere, he was closely connected to the Umayyad dynasty, serving as an advisor to Hisham b. ʿAbd al-Malik.[5] In this capacity, he would have been an authoritative voice on late Umayyad legal doctrine, articulating positions endorsed, or at least accepted, by the regime. He also spent much of his career in the capital city of Damascus, not in the Iraqi periphery where Schacht and others center legal development. The collapse of the Umayyads had a profound impact on al-Awzaʿi 's career. The political strife following the death of his patron Hisham in AH 124/743 CE appears to have precipitated his retirement to Beirut. Despite his self-imposed exile, he was subject to suspicion and interrogation by the Abbasids.[6] While

he ultimately gained the begrudging respect of the new Abbasid rulers, his influence was diminished and his following reduced.[7]

At some point, either before or after his departure from the capital, he reportedly wrote three legal works, none of which is extant. As discussed below, modern scholarship on al-Awzaʿi focuses almost exclusively on his lost *Kitab al-Siyar*. While the work is not extant, portions of it are preserved in other sources, such as Abu Yusuf's (d. AH 182/798 CE) *Radd ʿala siyar al-Awzaʿi* ('Refutation of al-Awzaʿi's "Military Expeditions" '), al-Shafiʿi's (d. AH 204/820 CE) *Kitab al-Umm* ('The Exemplar') and al-Tabari's (d. AH 310/923 CE) *Ikhtilaf al-fuqahaʾ* ('The Jurists' Disagreements'). It is worth noting that all of those who preserved portions of al-Awzaʿi's *Kitab al-Siyar* represented rival *madhhab*s. Surprisingly, al-Awzaʿi's *Kitab al-Siyar* does not appear in Ibn al-Nadim's (d. late tenth century CE) bibliographical work, the *Fihrist* ('Index'). Ibn al-Nadim does attribute two works to al-Awzaʿi, a *Kitab al-Sunan fi l-fiqh* ('Book of Right Practice in Legal Reasoning') and a *Kitab al-Masaʾil fi l-fiqh* ('Book of Problems in Legal Reasoning'). Both of these works are unfortunately lost and are not cited by name in later sources. The absence of the *Kitab al-Siyar* from Ibn al-Nadim's list suggests that the work modern scholars consider to be al-Awzaʿi's most important was no longer available in Baghdad two centuries after al-Awzaʿi's death. Its disappearance from circulation raises questions about how important it really was.[8] In addition, al-Awzaʿi was broadly praised as a scholar and transmitter of hadith (*muhaddith*), despite the fact that his legal judgments, preserved sporadically in later sources, seldom invoke hadith.

Modern scholarship on al-Awzaʿi has focused almost exclusively on his *Siyar*, despite its possible marginality in the Islamic scholarly tradition. Arguably, this tendency can be traced back to Joseph Schacht, who relied on al-Shafiʿi's reproduction of Abu Yusuf's version of al-Awzaʿi's *Siyar* and on portions preserved in al-Tabari's *Ikhtilaf al-fuqahaʾ*.[9] In addition, modern scholarship on al-Awzaʿi has been affected by a broader trend in which the *Siyar* literature in general has been treated, perhaps too optimistically, as a kind of proto-international legal system. This trend is most clearly exemplified by Majid Khadduri's decision to publish his 1966 translation of al-Shaybani's *Kitab al-Siyar* under the ambitious title of *The Islamic Law of Nations*.[10]

More recent scholarship on al-Awzaʿi has followed this trend. For instance, Anke Bouzenita has used al-Awzaʿi 's *Siyar* to posit a theory of Islamic governance.[11] Gamal Soleiman's work follows a similar vein.[12] While Abdulhadi Alajmi adds biographical sources to the mix, he still focuses exclusively on issues of political legitimacy.[13] Even Gerhard Conrad's exhaustive work on Syrian qadis retains a narrow focus on scholarly networks rather than on actual doctrine.[14] Similar criticism can be leveled at my own work on al-Awzaʿi as well.[15] The centrality of the lost *Kitab al-Siyar* in later reconstructions of al-Awzaʿi's legal thought contributes to his image as primarily a frontier scholar, concerned almost exclusively with administrative and military matters. This is a product of both the fragmentary nature of the sources and the trajectory of modern scholarship.

However, other available sources, largely unexplored for the study of al-Awzaʿi, include traces of his approach that tell a different story. Like most early jurists, al-Awzaʿi was also recognized as a *muhaddith* and reports attributed to him appear in the standard Sunni hadith collections. Given that al-Awzaʿi is frequently noted

in modern scholarship for his expertise on matters related to jihad and the division of spoils, one would expect the hadith collections to reflect this, offering copious reports on these topics transmitted on his authority. This is not the case. In fact, an examination of the six standard collections reveals a surprising paucity of reports on warfare-related issues attributed to al-Awzaʿi's authority.[16] Of the 418 al-Awzaʿi hadiths I have found there, a mere 17 deal with issues of jihad, spoils distribution, and other such matters. This represents only 4 per cent of the total. Even this number is generous, since it includes several reports that relate to warfare only tangentially. One could easily dismiss the four reports of Muhammad predicting a future truce with the Byzantines, for instance.[17] Similarly, one could argue that the report in al-Bukhari (d. AH 256/870 CE) in which Muhammad forbids ʿUmar from killing a man who insulted him while he was dividing the spoils really has less to do with the division of spoils than with Muhammad's mercy.[18] More restrictive criteria could reduce the al-Awzaʿi warfare-related hadiths to a paltry 3 per cent.

Nor are these hadith from al-Awzaʿi relating to warfare evenly distributed between the collections. Only al-Tirmidhi (d. AH 279/892 CE) includes a significant percentage of al-Awzaʿi warfare reports. His five reports (16 per cent of the total 31) deal explicitly with issues related to the division of spoils.[19] Al-Nasaʾi (d. AH 303/915 CE) includes only one vague report about showing pride in fighting (out of 117 total).[20] Muslim (d. AH 261/875 CE) includes no al-Awzaʿi reports related to warfare (out of 57 total references). There is no mention of al-Awzaʿi in Malik's (d. AH 179/796 CE) *al-Muwattaʾ* ('Prepared Way'), either. The reason for this disparity in the collections is not clear and merits further investigation.

Topics relating to other government functions are also sparsely covered in al-Awzaʿi's hadith reports. Only 14 of the 418 reports address the application of the *hadd* punishments prescribed in the Qurʾan and other issues related to crime. A mere eight reports (2 per cent) address the obligatory and non-obligatory *zakat* and *sadaqa* charitable payments. In addition, there are 11 reports describing Muhammad's prohibition of sharecropping and his contradictory verdicts about the permissibility of charging rent for farmland. There are almost no references to the various theological disputes in which al-Awzaʿi played a role, with only one mentioning *qadar* ('free will').[21] Based on the traditional understanding of al-Awzaʿi as a frontier scholar focused on issues of warfare, this is not what one would expect to find in the hadith collections. The paucity of *siyar*-related reports is quite striking.

What we do find in the hadith collections are a significant number of al-Awzaʿi reports dealing with issues of prayer, fasting, and ritual purity. These topics account for 113 of the 418 reports, or 27 per cent. Here, I have applied a strict set of criteria, excluding for instance general statements about cleanliness that do not appear to be related to ablutions as well as the five reports in which Muhammad prays for rain. Looser criteria would raise the prayer-related percentage to approximately 30 per cent. This preliminary cataloguing of al-Awzaʿi's hadith reports demonstrates that, despite his association with jihad, al-Awzaʿi transmitted nearly ten times as many hadith reports relating to prayer and ritual cleansing. Furthermore, despite his close relationship with those in power, a very small percentage of his hadith reports involve questions of crime, taxes, or other aspects of administrative practice, the realms with which the Umayyads are supposed to have been most concerned.

This distribution of al-Awzaʿi hadith reports is difficult to reconcile with traditional assumptions about al-Awzaʿi's legal interests and prominence as a frontier scholar. One would expect hadith reports he transmitted to address matters upon which he focused his attention. If we follow Schacht's approach and assume that Umayyad-era practice was later transformed into prophetic hadith, whose transmission was ascribed to prominent Umayyad figures, then al-Awzaʿi's hadith reports ought to reflect his legal rulings.[22] There are two plausible explanations for the unexpected distribution of al-Awzaʿi's hadith. One possibility is that the al-Awzaʿi reports are an exception, or even a refutation, of Schacht's understanding of the relationship between Umayyad practice and later hadith collections. The other is that our assumptions about al-Awzaʿi's focus on military and administrative law are mistaken and that his legal interests, and by extension those of the Umayyads, were much broader.

AL-AWZAʿI BEYOND HIS EXTANT WORKS

To understand al-Awzaʿi's interests more thoroughly, it is necessary to search beyond the fragments of his *Kitab al-Siyar* and the hadith collections. Because al-Awzaʿi's *madhhab* did not survive long after his death, we cannot turn to texts written by his own followers or later school texts designed to summarize and explicate his *madhhab*'s doctrines. Instead, we are forced to look to texts written by scholars from rival *madhhab*s seeking to distinguish their views from those of other scholars. The Islamic comparative legal literature is a substantial corpus of widely varied works spanning several centuries of scholarly endeavors. Unfortunately, there is not a standard set of canonical texts, the texts exhibit biases associated with individual schools and authors, and they tend to be voluminous. Al-Tabari's *Ikhtilaf al-fuqahaʾ* is the most famous of these works. However, for the present purpose, it is problematic. While it includes significant material from al-Awzaʿi, including lengthy excerpts from his lost *Kitab al-Siyar*, al-Tabari's work is not preserved in its entirety. The portions that are preserved address laws of war, taxes, and other administrative matters – precisely those areas that Schacht and others describe as al-Awzaʿi's focus.[23] Indeed, the limited preservation of al-Tabari's work and its prominent place in modern scholarship may contribute to the misperception that al-Awzaʿi and Umayyad jurists in general had a narrow, administrative focus.

Some preliminary indications of al-Awzaʿi's wider interests can be derived from Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr's (d. AH 390/1071 CE) *Istidhkar al-jamiʿ li-madhahib fuqahaʾ al-amsar* ('The Comprehensive Record for the Schools of the Garrison Cities' Jurists').[24] Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr's *Istidhkar* has three main strengths as such a starting point. First, it is a relatively early text, composed in the mid-eleventh century. Second, it is fairly comprehensive. Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr was a Maliki jurist who was also apparently influenced by the Zaharis and the Shafiʿis, giving him a somewhat broader perspective.[25] He tends to cite a wide variety of sources. Third, the fact that Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr was an Andalusian scholar is significant. Al-Awzaʿi 's influence persisted longer in Muslim Spain than in other parts of the Muslim world, until he was eventually supplanted by the Malikis, a transition which has not yet been fully explained.[26] An Andalusian Maliki text written not too long after al-Awzaʿi's influence there waned by an author

familiar with other traditions is an appropriate place to start in examining the evidence for al-Awzaʿi's interests.

Out of the 40,000 citations in the work, 684 are from al-Awzaʿi – a mere 2 per cent. Many of these reports do not describe al-Awzaʿi's views specifically, but simply include him in lists of scholars who agree or disagree about particular questions. However, despite the limitations the data present, useful insights about al-Awzaʿi can still be derived from Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr – after all, nearly 700 citations is still a good number.

The distribution of the al-Awzaʿi reports in Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr is surprisingly similar to that in the hadith collections. The *Kitab al-Jihad* in Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr includes 50 references to al-Awzaʿi, or approximately 7 per cent of the total. While this is slightly higher than the 4 per cent in the hadith collections, it is still surprisingly small. The 23 references to *hadd* punishments account for a fraction over 3 per cent of the total, the same percentage as in the hadith collections. Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr's *Kitab al-Zakat* includes 37 references to al-Awzaʿi, a slightly higher percentage than in the hadith collections (5.4 per cent, as opposed to 2 per cent). References to prayer, ablutions, and ritual purity are spread over six sections of Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr's work, namely the *Kitab Wuqut al-salat* ('book of prayer times'), the *Kitab al-ʿAmal fi l-wudu'* ('book of ablutions'), the *Kitab al-Tahara* ('book of ritual purity'), the *Kitab al-Salat* ('book of prayer'), the *Kitab al-Jumʿa* ('book of Friday prayer'), and the *Kitab Qisr al-salat fi l-safar* ('book of shortening prayer while traveling').[27] These sections include 173 references to al-Awzaʿi, or 25 per cent of the total of 684. Here again, the distribution of al-Awzaʿi reports is remarkably consistent with that in the hadith collections. In general, then, it appears that the distribution of reports in the hadith collections is not an anomaly, and that these collections reflect al-Awzaʿi's actual legal interests.

Al-Awzaʿi is not the only scholar associated with the Umayyads to appear in Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr. A number of other Umayyad-era authorities, including ʿAmir b. Sharahil al-Shaʿbi (d. *c.* AH 109/727 CE), Makhul al-Shami (d. AH 113/731 CE), and Ibn Shihab al-Zuhri (d. AH 124/741 CE) are mentioned fleetingly. Sufyan al-Thawri (d. AH 161/778 CE) is a more prominent presence. Like the others, he was closely associated with the Umayyad regime and continued to be recognized as an authority after their overthrow.[28] In fact, he appears more frequently than al-Awzaʿi, with 1,004 reports attributed to him.

The Sufyan reports display a similar distribution to the al-Awzaʿi reports. Despite his prominence as a frontier scholar, fewer than 3 per cent of the Sufyan reports appear in Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr's *Kitab al-Jihad*. Other administrative matters occupy a small percentage of the Sufyan material as well. *Zakat* accounts for only 6.5 per cent and *hadd* punishments account for 3 per cent – almost identical to al-Awzaʿi's distribution. Sufyan's reports do include a higher percentage of Hajj related reports (15 per cent as opposed to 6.5 per cent for al-Awzaʿi). Like the al-Awzaʿi reports, a more substantial percentage deal with prayer and ritual matters. Approximately 23 per cent of the Sufyan reports appear in the six sections on ritual mentioned above, remarkably similar to the 25 per cent of al-Awzaʿi reports concerning such topics.

Thus, the two Umayyad-era scholars who figure most prominently in Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr both pay much more attention to ritual practice than to the administrative

issues Schacht and others assume were the principal focus of Umayyad concern. Consequently, it is necessary to reject the assumption that al-Awzaʿi and the Umayyads generally were exclusively, or even principally, concerned with administrative and military aspects of Islamic law. Instead, Umayyad scholars, like later legal authorities, were interested in the entire spectrum of Islamic law.

It remains, then, to investigate whether al-Awzaʿi's views merely represent a common ancient doctrine shared by other early figures, or whether the situation is more complex. The discussion that follows will focus on al-Awzaʿi's views on ritual law, as presented in Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr and, to a lesser extent, in the hadith collections. This is an area that is far removed from the administrative law that purportedly consumed Umayyad attention and one where various schools eventually developed subtly different doctrines. It is also an area where the data suggest al-Awzaʿi had considerable interest. His views on such matters offer some insights into the degree to which he and other early scholars did or did not agree upon a common ancient doctrine.

First, it is important to note that the data do not show Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr merely repeating al-Awzaʿi hadith reports. If this were the case, we would naturally expect to find the distribution to be similar to that in the hadith collections. However, only a dozen of the 173 reports on prayer and ritual involve al-Awzaʿi's hadith. The vast majority report his opinions on specific questions instead. Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr clearly did not include al-Awzaʿi merely as a *muhaddith* to document particular hadith reports. Instead, Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr was more interested in al-Awzaʿi's judgments than in his hadith.

Turning to the content of these reports, then, what can we reconstruct of al-Awzaʿi's views on ritual matters? To begin, two essential caveats are in order. First, the 113 hadith reports and 173 judgments do not offer a conclusive or complete picture of al-Awzaʿi's doctrines. Much of the data either addresses very narrow questions or offers vague guidance. Second, some of al-Awzaʿi's statements and the questions to which they respond are rather cryptic. Without additional context, their significance can be hard to fathom, leaving ample room for speculation and error.

In general, there is a high degree of consistency between the hadith material and the positions ascribed to al-Awzaʿi in Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr. While Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr does not simply repeat al-Awzaʿi's hadiths, the judgments he reports are typically compatible with the hadith al-Awzaʿi reported. There are a number of issues that appear in the hadith material that are not addressed in Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr. For instance, al-Awzaʿi transmitted hadiths in which Muhammad shortened prayers because of a crying child. This question is not addressed in Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr.[29] Similarly, the Prophet's prayers for rain appear only in the hadith.[30] Neither are all of the topics al-Awzaʿi addresses in Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr found in his hadith transmissions.

Several general tendencies can be found in Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr's material on al-Awzaʿi and ritual. First, quite frequently, al-Awzaʿi's agreement with other scholars is noted. He appears in many cases in long lists of scholars who espouse a particular view, suggesting near universal agreement on the question at hand. In other cases, the list is shorter, showing divisions between scholars advocating different answers. There is not a clear pattern to these lists, nor is there any consistency in the names included, as one would expect if there were clearly drawn factional lines. Things are not that tidy. It is also clear that Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr is not deploying these lists simply to demonstrate

widespread agreement with Malik. While al-Awzaʿi is frequently depicted as agreeing with Malik, in other cases he is not. Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr does not appear to have been trying to coopt al-Awzaʿi and other early scholars into the Maliki school.

In some cases, al-Awzaʿi stands alone as the only scholar addressing a particular question. For instance, he is the only one to assert that one should recite to oneself if the imam cannot be heard well enough during prayer.[31] Only he and al-Tabari instruct travelers to go to the local mosque rather than shortening prayers if there is a mosque in the village through which they pass.[32]

In other examples, al-Awzaʿi expressly disagrees with other scholars. In some cases, his position is more stringent than others. For instance, he insists that funeral prayers should conclude before the ʿ*Asr* prayer.[33] He also insists that the *iqama* is always required, without exception.[34] In contrast to Malik and most others, al-Awzaʿi requires that the imam pause after the first *takbir*, and again after the *fatiha* and after the recitation.[35] More often, though, al-Awzaʿi 's positions offer a bit more flexibility than others. While talking during the *khutba* ('Friday sermon') is not allowed, al-Awzaʿi does allow people to bless someone who sneezes at any time during prayers. He also allows one to return greetings during the *adhan* and *iqama*.[36] He even allows people to walk around during the *khutba*, as long as they do not interfere with anyone else. Although, he makes an exception for someone blocking the aisle.[37] In general, al-Awzaʿi is also a bit more flexible regarding ablutions. For instance, in contrast to others, he holds that touching his wife does not negate a man's ablutions.[38] He is also less exacting about the cleanliness of the ablution water. Only al-Awzaʿi and Sufyan al-Thawri have no objection to praying behind an imam who is the son of adultery.[39]

In other cases, al-Awzaʿi appears to allow a variety of practices and to reject too much nitpicking. For instance, he holds that it does not matter whether or not one pauses between the paired *rakʿa*s and the *witr* in the evening prayer.[40] He also says a pause is optional before the *rakʿa* with the *salam*.[41] In response to the argument about whether or not it was permissible for the imam to shorten the recitation during Friday prayers, al-Awzaʿi simply said he had never heard of this happening.[42] This response is similar to al-Awzaʿi's responses to a number of hypothetical spoils-related questions in al-Fazari's *Kitab al-Siyar* where he refuses to answer highly improbable hypothetical questions.[43]

From these limited reports, then, can one actually posit an al-Awzaʿi approach to ritual and prayer? Unfortunately, even if a distinct al-Awzaʿi approach actually existed, the data thus far are too thin to reconstruct it confidently. Many of the reports in Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr describe disagreements about narrow issues and offer little to point to broader guiding principles. In all likelihood, examining other failed *madhhab*s' positions would produce similarly vague results. Without scholars of later generations to describe and refine the practices of their forebears, a comprehensive image is elusive.

However, there are some hints of the existence of an al-Awzaʿi approach to prayer in Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr. A few reports preserve traces of competition between al-Awzaʿi and others, suggesting efforts to differentiate between al-Awzaʿi and the followers of other *madhhab*s. For instance, in one report, al-Awzaʿi criticizes the Kufans for failing to raise their arms to shoulder height, declaring that this would make their prayers less effective.[44] Here he appears to be drawing a distinction between schools.

Al-Awzaʿi's followers would never pray like the deficient Kufans. Whether this is an indicator of regional variations and competition or an implicit criticism of specific Kufan rivals is unclear.

In other cases, Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr conflates al-Awzaʿi with the Syrians, stating that al-Awzaʿi and the *ahl al-Sham* hold particular views.[45] These examples raise the possibility that there was a distinctly Syrian approach to prayer and ritual, represented by al-Awzaʿi. However, these cases are relatively rare. In fact, Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr seldom makes regional distinctions, focusing instead on the views of individual scholars. It is also possible that these occasional regional associations are later accretions.

While this investigation of al-Awzaʿi's views on ritual does not permit a tidy reconstruction of his doctrinal views on such matters, it does illustrate the shortcomings of the theory of a common ancient doctrine. Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr does not portray al-Awzaʿi and other Umayyad-era scholars as being in agreement about ritual matters. Instead, the reports of their positions show wide disagreement over both minor and significant questions. The disagreements between these early scholars do not appear to represent identifiable factions among scholars. There is not a discernable pattern of scholars who regularly agreed or disagreed with each other. In some instances, al-Awzaʿi might appear in agreement with Abu Hanifa, in opposition to Malik and others. In other cases he confirms Malik's views while rejecting others with whom he agreed on still other issues.

It should not be surprising that Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr portrays a scholarly world of division and disagreement. The very premise of the *ikhtilaf* ('disagreement') literature acknowledges that early scholars disagreed, about both fundamental issues and ritual minutia. Works like Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr's were written to catalogue disagreements, while demonstrating (implicitly or explicitly) the superiority of the author's *madhhab*'s position. The very existence of such a literature, covering all aspects of Islamic law, suggests that the early community had not yet come to agreement about many issues. Given the extent of the disagreements documented voluminously in such sources, it is difficult to accept the idea that there was some sort of common ancient doctrine to which Umayyad-era scholars deferred, as Schacht and others suggest.

While Schacht and others acknowledge disputes over administrative matters, such as taxation and spoils division, they imply a greater degree of harmony about other legal matters. This contrast is to a great extent a product of the sources Schacht and others relied upon to reconstruct the legal milieu of al-Awzaʿi and other Umayyad-era scholars. They were obviously well-aware of the feud between al-Awzaʿi's followers and the Hanafi disciple Abu Yusuf (d. AH 182/798 CE) over taxation and spoils, thanks largely to al-Tabari. They did not, however, see evidence of disputes over other matters. Instead, we are left with an image of consensus around a common set of practices.

Evidence of disagreements among Umayyad-era scholars about ritual and other matters raises the question of whether a common ancient doctrine actually existed and what role Umayyad scholars played in articulating it for later generations. Even in the absence of extensive evidence, it is plausible to assume that there was a degree of uniformity in religious practice during the lifetime of Muhammad. The community was relatively small and would have looked to the Prophet for instruction in matters of prayer and ritual, as well as other areas. His guidance may or may not

have been consistent, but it was immediate and authoritative. The rapid growth of the community following the death of the Prophet must have complicated matters considerably. As the community's geographical distribution grew, the uniformity of the close-knit Medinan *umma* would have been more difficult to maintain. The idea of a common ancient doctrine requires one to assume that there were enough shared conceptions of ritual and dogma to provide a degree of cohesion, despite the social changes embroiling the emerging empire. Data from al-Awzaʿi and other Umayyad-era scholars might raise questions about whether such doctrinal unity on some elements of the faith ever existed.

Conversely, it is also possible that there was indeed a set of commonly accepted practices and rituals that the early community followed, but that these were rudimentary at best. Later generations likely refined these practices, transforming general guidance about prayer, ablutions, and other topics into detailed, sometimes elaborate rituals. Such a process of refinement would likely have entailed sometimes vociferous disagreements between scholars, often based on meagre evidence. Much of the material in Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr that is attributed to al-Awzaʿi and other Umayyad-era scholars focuses on such narrow details. Does one pause between *takbir*s? How many pebbles should be used for dry ablutions? Does a runny nose negate one's ritual purity? Questions like these suggest that Umayyad-era scholars were filling in details and adding nuance to generally accepted, but not yet exhaustively regulated, practices.

With this context in mind, perhaps al-Awzaʿi's occasional statements of indifference toward ritual minutiae best represent the earliest practice of the community. His assertions that pauses at certain points in prayer are optional, for example, may reflect the practice of the early community, when ritual practices had not yet become so tightly scripted. However, it is also possible that he was simply less stringent than his colleagues about certain details. The sources, unfortunately, do not offer clear guidance in this regard. In response to some questions, al-Awzaʿi is quite exacting about details, but in other cases, he is more flexible. The reasons for this contrast are not clear either.

CONCLUSIONS

While this limited examination of al-Awzaʿi and the Umayyad role in the development of Islamic law does not allow a thorough understanding of the influence the regime and its backers exercised over the formation of Islamic legal traditions, it does suggest several important conclusions.

First, the assumption that the Umayyads were principally concerned with legal matters pertaining to administration and warfare must be abandoned. Material from al-Awzaʿi and others reveals a much broader interest in legal matters such as doctrine and ritual. This misunderstanding of Umayyad-era legal scholarship is, to a great extent, the product of Schacht's reliance on al-Tabari's partially preserved *ikhtilaf* and of later scholars' unquestioning acceptance of Schacht's conclusions about al-Awzaʿi and the Umayyads. A reevaluation of the Umayyads' influence on broader aspects of Islamic legal development is necessary.

Second, this examination calls into question Schacht's suggestion that the Umayyads adhered to a vaguely defined common ancient doctrine. Even a cursory

perusal of reports about ritual and other matters reveals more disagreement than harmony about such topics. Umayyad scholars such as al-Awzaʿi and Sufyan al-Thawri often disagreed both with those less closely associated with the Umayyad regime and with each other. Consensus about any aspect of doctrine and practice appears to have been elusive.

Third, it is also interesting to note that in Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr late Umayyad scholars appear more prominently than earlier ones. Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr cites Makhul al-Shami only 31 times and al-Shaʿbi only seven times. Even the prolific and controversial *muhaddith* Ibn Shihab al-Zuhri appears only 76 times, far less frequently than al-Awzaʿi and Sufyan al-Thawri. Equally surprising is the fact that the famous exemplar of piety al-Hasan al-Basri (d. AH 110/728 CE) is mentioned only 125 times, compared to al-Awzaʿi's 684 appearances. The meaning of this distribution of citations is difficult to ascertain. It may offer evidence concerning the timing of the shift in focus in Islamic legal thinking from general themes to narrower questions of doctrine and ritual. It is possible that Makhul, al-Zuhri, and other earlier Umayyad figures were simply not confronted with such detailed questions and that the beginning of detailed legal distinctions can be traced to the late Umayyad period. It is also possible that al-Awzaʿi and Sufyan al-Thawri enjoyed greater prestige than modern scholarship acknowledges and that the legacy of their legal thinking extended longer than is generally assumed. At the same time, the absence of references to al-Shaʿbi and especially al-Zuhri in Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr suggests that their fame as legal scholars and *muhaddith*s emerged later. It is especially puzzling that al-Zuhri does not figure more prominently, despite being an especially prolific hadith transmitter. Further investigation of possible explanations would be in order.

Fourth, it is abundantly clear from this examination of al-Awzaʿi's hadith reports and citations in Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr that Umayyad legal authorities remained important centuries after the fall of the regime. Their opinions clearly mattered for later scholars, despite the demise of their *madhhab*s. The fact that they were not always in agreement suggests a lively discourse about a broad array of legal matters during the Umayyad era. Al-Awzaʿi's prominent role in these disputes also demonstrates that Iraqi centers of learning had not yet completely overshadowed Syrian scholarship.

Finally, it is clear that al-Awzaʿi's interests were not limited to administrative topics and that he articulated a more comprehensive vision of Islamic law and practice than modern scholars have assumed. While the available sources may not allow a thorough reconstruction of al-Awzaʿi's legal contributions, the traces that remain underscore his importance.

NOTES

1 Schacht 1964: 23–4.
2 Schacht 1964: 29.
3 Judd 2013: 9–14.
4 Judd 2013: 71–9.
5 Judd 2005: 12–13; Judd 2013: 71–9.
6 Judd 2005: 12–13; Judd 2013: 71–9.
7 Judd 2005: 22–5.
8 Ibn al-Nadim 2002: 376.

9 Al-Tabari 1933.
10 Khadduri 1966.
11 Bouzenita 2012: 137–64; Bouzenita 2007: 19–46; Bouzenita 2001.
12 Soleiman 1991.
13 Alajmi 2009.
14 Conrad 1994.
15 Judd 2013.
16 Al-Bukhari 1981 (65 refs); Muslim 2003 (57 refs); Abu Daʾud 1998 (69 refs); al-Tirmidhi 1996 (31 refs); al-Nasaʾi 1999 (117 refs); Ibn Majah 1996 (79 refs).
17 Abu Daʾud 1998: 15, 2767; 39, 4292; 39, 4293; Ibn Majah 1996: 4227. (Hadith references are cited using the hadith numbers in the text rather than the pagination of the editions.)
18 Al-Bukhari 1981: 78, 6233.
19 Al-Tirmidhi 1996: 1556, 1557, 1562, 1568, 1660. The last report is a more generic call for jihad.
20 Al-Nasaʾi 1999: 2558.
21 Ibn Majah 1996: 97.
22 Schacht 1950: 58 ff.
23 Stewart 2004: 328.
24 Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr 1993. A complete analysis remains to be done, and will require searching through several texts from different schools.
25 *EI2*, 'Ibn Abd al-Barr' (Ch. Pellat).
26 See on this Wilk in this volume.
27 Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr 1993: vols I–VI.
28 Judd 2013: 39–90.
29 Al-Bukhari 1981: 10, 707; Abu Daʾud 1998: 2, 789; al-Nasaʾi 1999: 10, 825; Ibn Majah 1996: 5, 1044.
30 Al-Bukhari 1981: 11, 933; 15, 1018; 15, 1033; Muslim 2003: 10, 2116; al-Nasaʾi 1999: 17, 1528.
31 Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr 1993: IV, 235.
32 Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr 1993: VI, 118.
33 Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr 1993: I, 373.
34 Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr 1993: IV, 50.
35 Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr 1993: IV, 238.
36 Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr 1993: V, 47.
37 Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr 1993: V, 93–4.
38 Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr 1993: III, 50.
39 Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr 1993: V, 379.
40 Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr 1993: V, 258.
41 Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr 1993: V, 283.
42 Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr 1993: V, 112.
43 Al-Fazari 1987.
44 Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr 1993: IV, 107–8.
45 Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr 1993: IV, 71, 246.

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CHAPTER TEN

THE SURRENDER AGREEMENTS
Origins and authenticity

Milka Levy-Rubin

The early surrender agreements made between the Muslim conquerors[1] and the inhabitants of the conquered cities of the Near East are a common feature throughout the early Muslim historiographic and legal literature, where the agreements represent the initial contact between the two. The agreements have been studied from numerous points of view, often with suspicion as to their resembling any possible original such agreement.[2] The main claim against the authenticity of the surrender agreements is that some of the agreements cited by later Muslim authors are detailed and comparatively long documents: they include not only general conditions concerning payment or taxation on the side of the conquered and the obligation of protection of people, property, and prayer houses, but also many intricate details regarding arrangements concerning public matters, as well as people's rights and property; the agreements are written, witnessed, and signed – usually by the commander of the conquering Muslim army – and at times are reported to have been sealed. They seem to be too complex and versatile for conquerors who had recently emerged from the desert and were not yet sure of their position in regard to the conquered population. Thus Fattal believes that the early agreements were rather succinct and undetailed. According to this view, some of these agreements were made verbally, and it is doubtful whether many of them were in fact written down at the time of the conquest.[3]

Two scholars, Albrecht Noth and Wadad al-Qadi, dedicated articles specifically to the question of the authenticity of these agreements.[4] Noth believes that the reports concerning the agreements reflect authentic documents, though these have been altered at times by the transmitters; some details, such as the obligation not to revile or hit Muslims, or the obligation to build roads or bridges, were added later.[5] He adds that since we do not possess any copy of an original contract, we do not have any secure means of verifying whether these agreements are authentic, forged, or just a fiction.[6] Al-Qadi supports the authenticity of the surrender agreements. She bases her argument on the texts of the agreements themselves and arrives at the conclusion that they were drawn up in similar ways, are grounded in similar formats including basically the same elements, that their style is standardized, and that their content is analogous.[7]

The arguments of Noth and al-Qadi can be further supported with the aid of evidence found outside the corpus of Muslim literature, originating in the realm of

the conquered rather than that of the conquerors, as well as by further consideration of the Muslim sources themselves. The crux of this claim is that the surrender agreements made between the Muslim conquerors and the representatives of various conquered entities (cities, regions, or groups) have their origin in an ancient tradition of international diplomacy and law which, *mutatis mutandis*, was still prevalent throughout the territories when conquered by the Muslims. This tradition was not only a norm accepted by the conquered population at the time of the conquest, but was known to the conquerors as well. If this is true, then not only is there no need to suspect the authenticity of these agreements, there is in fact good reason to acknowledge their validity.

TREATIES BEFORE THE CONQUESTS

International treaties formed the main basis for international relations from ancient times throughout the ancient Near East, as well as throughout the Hellenistic, Roman, and Byzantine world.[8] In the Graeco-Roman world international pacts and agreements were considered part of the *ius gentium* (the law applicable to all people). The treaty itself was under the sacred protection of the deity invoked by the oath. Zeus/Jupiter was called *Zeus horkios kai pistios*, that is, 'the guardian of oaths and good faith (*pistis/fides*)'. This was the actual 'basis of obligation' in all agreements under international law. The requirement that 'treaties should be upheld' (*pacta sunt servanda*) became a categorical imperative of international law.[9]

This tradition of treaty-making was characterized by various common elements: the pacts or agreements were concluded following preliminary negotiations; they required ratification of the sovereign body; they were ratified by solemn oaths; they had a similar structure, including often preamble, stipulations, sanctions, provisions for deposit in the temple and periodical reading, and names of the gods acting as witnesses. It is often emphasized that they were written down. Copies of the treaty, written in many cases in two languages, were kept by both parties, usually in the temple, or published and placed in the archives. A pact or agreement was valid either for a certain period of time, or throughout the life of the ruler who signed it. Upon the death of one of the parties it became void and needed to be renewed. It should be remarked that stipulations often included such elements as an obligation of loyalty, military aid, return of fugitives, giving hostages as guarantee of observance of the treaty by the vassal, and payment of an annual or lump sum of money. At times these treaties could be very detailed, and included specific information on various matters, such as arrangements concerning the evacuation of people and territories, the army, hostages, boundaries, provisions, equipment, payments, and so on.[10]

There was a common terminology used in conjunction with the treaties.[11] Thus, the covenant was called 'bond and oath' or 'pact and promise' (for example, Hebrew *brit we-ʾala*; Greek *horkos kai syntheke*; Arabic *ʿaqd wa-hilf*;[12] Persian *pasht ud zenhar*[13]) or called 'honesty' or 'confidence' (Akkadian *adē*; Aramaic *ʿdyʾ*; Hebrew *ʿedut* or *amana*; Greek *pistis*; Latin *fides*); 'a covenant was cut', that is, made (for example, Hebrew *karat brit*; Greek *horkia temnein*); violated – 'broken' (Hebrew *hepher*; Arabic *naqada*; Greek *parabainein*; Latin *frangere*); the relationship was described as 'love and friendship' (for example, Hebrew *twb we-hesed*; Greek *filia kai symmachia*; Latin *amicitia et societas*) and more.[14] The existence of such a universal

vocabulary demonstrates that treaty-making was based on a well-established set of rules, perceptions, and terms which formed the basis of understanding and accord between the negotiating parties and were commonly known and accepted throughout the ancient world.

This tradition endured well into the end of Byzantine rule in the East, and agreements and treaties, often including a long set of stipulations, securities, sanctions, and oaths, continued to be signed and witnessed. These agreements had served as a central diplomatic tool throughout Late Antiquity in the relations of the empire with the competing political entity – the Sasanian Empire – as well as with groups of lesser political status – whom the Romans called 'barbarians', including the Arabians. As shall presently be shown, it is this diplomatic tradition, in fact, that was to play a major role in the seventh-century Muslim conquest of the Near East.

TREATIES IN LATE ANTIQUITY

Throughout Late Antiquity, the Roman Empire made a series of treaties with the Sasanian Empire, including those of 244, 298, 363, 422, 505/6, 533, 562, and the last one, in 628, just a few years prior to the Arabian conquest.[15] As a matter of course, these treaties were preceded by an offer of peace by one of the parties, followed by intricate diplomatic negotiations held by embassies which, on different occasions, were made up of envoys of various ranks: from those bearing plenipotentiary powers to those who served solely as messengers. During these negotiations the conditions of the future treaty were discussed, including boundaries and fortifications, various payments, property, diverse rights, such as rites of passage, or trading rights, withdrawal of soldiers, the fate of prisoners of war, hostages, and so on.[16] Often these negotiations were conducted in writing, via an exchange of letters. Letters from the rulers on both sides also ratified these agreements.[17]

A significant example of this formal procedure is preserved in the account of Menander the Guardsman describing the conclusion of the 50-year peace in 562 between the Byzantines and the Persians. Writing in the second half of the sixth century,[18] Menander recounts in detail in his *History* the process of the negotiations, the stipulations of the treaty itself, and the technicalities it involved. Following the negotiations, and before the terms of the treaty were put down in writing, 'it was agreed that both rulers should provide the documents which are called *sacrae litterae* in Latin, and which confirmed everything that had been established by the ambassadors'. He notes that following a full description of the terms these *sacrae litterae* were exchanged and provides a rare description of the process of the writing down of the treaty and its signing.[19] From this outstanding description it may be gathered that the formalities of treaty-making demanded skill and expertise, and that they followed an accepted conventional procedure of writing and translating, inspection of the translation by both sides, followed by the formal signing, which involved an additional editing of the treaty, the making of copies, the sealing of the original documents and the impression of the seals by envoys and interpreters of both parties, and the exchange of the originals and of the copies to be used for reference.

TREATIES WITH THE ARABIANS

These conventions were not limited to these two ancient empires, where they were long established,[20] but were employed by the Romans during Late Antiquity in regard to the 'barbarians'. This included the Arabians, where they entered into formal relationships with the empire. They became allies (*foederati*) of the empire not only in name, but according to the same rules, practices, norms, and terminology to which the Roman Empire had been formerly accustomed. Most of these treaties are in fact unequal treaties (*foedera*) which followed capitulation to the Romans.[21] Sources for treaties with the Arabians are less abundant than those for treaties with other 'barbarians'. However, there are enough to show that they were just as familiar with this institution as an international political tool as the tribes living on the northern borders of the empire.

Examples of treaties with Arabian groups include the alliance between Rome and the Thamudians during the second half of the second century CE, that of Imruʾ al-Qays with the Romans recorded in the funerary inscription in Namara from 328, the well-documented alliance made between Mavia, queen of the Saracens, and the Romans at the end of Valens' rule in 378, that of Amorkesus who in 474 CE became 'an ally of the Romans and phylarch of the Saracens under Roman rule on the borders of Arabia Petraea', and the peace treaty signed with Kinda in the sixth century.[22] Indeed, Zeev Rubin argues convincingly that alliances with such 'Saracens', as the Romans tended to call Arabian groups from about the fourth century CE, were an accepted and uninterrupted practice.[23]

It seems, therefore, that the Roman-Byzantine Empire employed the traditional formal alliances in her relationships with the Arabian tribes on its borders. Formal expressions of these alliances, such as skilled diplomatic envoys, dissolution of treaties following the death of one of the parties and the need for their renewal, blame for breach of a treaty, and the taking of hostages as security for the upholding of a treaty, all point to the existence of treaties signed according to the accepted Roman tradition. This is especially significant, since it indicates that the Arabians were quite familiar with the minutiae of formal alliances and treaties centuries before the conquests. The issues raised in the treaties and agreements signed in the Byzantine period – including the prohibition on alliances with other political entities; fugitives; prisoners of war; hostages serving as security; supplying military assistance; and payment or other remuneration – were central in past agreements of the empire, and continued to play an important part in future agreements during the Muslim conquest of the East.[24]

LOCAL SURRENDER AGREEMENTS BEFORE THE CONQUESTS

The cities of the East, and especially those of Mesopotamia, had lived through a history of wars and instability in which they were the main victims, being raided, looted, and transferred from one side to the other from the beginning of Roman rule in the East. A survey starting from the second century onwards shows that by the seventh century this situation was considered almost natural by the inhabitants, who probably could not imagine any other way of life. Moreover, since the ruling

empire could not be depended upon often enough to supply them with adequate fighting forces, a city's inhabitants were quite accustomed to taking responsibility for its fate. This meant that often they had to choose whether they wished to fight the advancing forces or to negotiate the city's surrender. All of this was often enough done independently, without consulting the central government or ruler at the time. Hence, it comes as no surprise that these cities, so used to taking their fate into their own hands, would negotiate their own surrender and conclude their own agreements independently and separately once the Arabian conquerors arrived on the scene.[25]

The mechanism of surrender

Graeco-Roman tradition differentiated clearly between conquest by force (Latin *vis*, Greek *kata kratos*) and conquest by surrender (Latin *deditio*; Greek *homologia*). While cities captured by force might be subjected to the killing and enslavement of their citizens and the loss of all their property, cities that capitulated could negotiate the terms of their surrender.[26] The surrender usually involved an appeal by those surrendering and a promise by the conqueror of *pistis* (Greek) or *fides* (Latin), both meaning 'faith', 'trust', or 'good faith'. As noted above, *pistis/fides* stood at the basis of all treaties and agreements,[27] and came to have the meaning of 'an assurance that produces confidence, *a promise, assurance, confirmation*', in particular '*a given promise of protection* or *security*; *a guarantee*'.[28] In Greek there is a clear connection between the ancient *horkia pista* or 'faithful oaths' taken on the occasion of the surrender and *pistis*.[29] The Roman term for surrender was *deditio in fidem*[30] – that is, 'giving oneself up to the good faith or trust' of the conqueror. It is often believed that this means that it was in fact a plea for mercy, or at the most, a promise only for the life of those surrendering.[31]

Another option was the *deditio per pactionem*,[32] – that is, surrender accompanied by an agreement or pact. This was, as defined by Phillipson, 'a covenant usually entered into by a general, usually on his own authority, engaging to secure ratification by his government of the terms to which he had consented'.[33] This act was based on 'giving words' of promise or commitment, as is indicated in Latin, Greek, and Syriac. Thus the pact is also called in Latin *verba deditionis* (lit. words of surrender); in Greek *homologia* from *logos* (word), and in Syriac *melta d-qeyama* (word of covenant). The implication of this is that surrender was automatically accompanied by terms or an agreement, all of which are enfolded in this one term.[34]

Shahal demonstrates that in Republican Rome the order was the following:[35] 1) the *pactio* was agreed upon by the conqueror and the defeated; 2) this was followed by the act of the *deditio* or formal surrender; 3) the *pactio* was implemented; 4) the *pactio* was ratified by the Roman Senate. Although a *pactio* had to be ratified by the Senate or the emperor, it was considered a legal commitment on the part of the conqueror, and its breach was considered a wrong or injustice.[36] Cicero lists the *pactio* along with the *foedus* (treaty or covenant), *sponsio* (agreement), *amicitia* (friendship), and *societas* (alliance) as one of the rudiments of the legal relations between nations.[37] The main elements that stood at the basis of the institution of treaties remained intact, and were applied in a similar manner in the later Roman Empire. This also holds for the institution of the *deditio*, and specifically the *deditio in pactionem*.[38]

This same system was later to be employed by the Muslim conquerors, who adopted the framework of the surrender agreement, including the surrender, the agreement that followed it, and the restitution of former social order, offering separate conditions in various circumstances according to their interests and possibilities. It is thus highly probable, as will be demonstrated in greater detail shortly, that the adoption of this mechanism was initiated by the conquered populations, by whom it had been employed for centuries. Additionally, although they were not as well versed in this, the Muslim conquerors, as has been shown above, were also familiar with this mechanism, and were thus readily willing to adopt it. The signing of surrender agreements thus seemed the most reasonable option, if the right terms of surrender could indeed be obtained.

SURRENDER AGREEMENTS MADE FOLLOWING THE CONQUESTS

We come now to the agreements made between the Muslim conquerors and the conquered cities and territories. These agreements were inspired by the long-existing tradition of agreements prevalent in the conquered territories. Five factors demonstrate that they indeed continue this tradition: terminology; procedure of surrendering; actual copies of agreements; the structure of the agreements; and the characteristics of the agreements.

The terminology

The most common term in the Arabic literature defining the relationship between the Muslim conquerors and the surrendered city is *aman*. The term is translated as safety, protection, safe conduct, and an assurance of safety and security. The relevant idioms are *talaba minhu al-amana* (he demanded from him an assurance of safety) and *aʿtawhu amanan* (he granted him an assurance of safety), as well as *dakhala fi amanihi* (he entered into his protection).[39] Thus, *aman* is parallel to the Greek *pistis* and the Latin *fides*, all of which denote faith, trust, protection, and assurance of security. According to Tyan,

> the institution of *aman* played a very important role in international law, making it possible to avoid some of the consequences of the basic principle of a permanent hostile state between the Muslim world and the rest of the world, and permitting the sojourn and the free activity of strangers in Muslim territory.[40]

Although current research is more hesitant regarding 'basic principles' of Islam in the seventh century, it is clear from its prevalent use throughout the agreements that the institution of *aman* played a central role.

As noted by Schacht, the term *aman* does not appear as such in the Qurʾan; it came into usage at the time of the conquests.[41] Sura 9 of the Qurʾan, discussing the relations between the believers and the polytheists, uses the terms *ʿahd, dhimma*, and *jiwar* rather than *aman*. The term *aman* is also absent from the first agreements referred to and cited by the sources, which were made by the Prophet with cities in the Arabian

Peninsula.[42] Only in later agreements does the noun *aman* start to appear regularly as the assurance of protection while – most important – the term *jiwar* disappears almost completely in connection with the protection of the non-Muslims although it does continue to be in wide use concerning the Muslims. The term *dhimma*, on the other hand, does continue to be in use, although it is much less common than *aman* in this connection. It thus seems that the later Muslim sources here were indeed following the terminology of the transmitters, who in their turn apparently reflected the process in which *aman* (=*pistis*) had become the dominant term.[43]

Another term used for agreement or pact is *baqt*. The word comes from the Greek *pakton*, which in its turn is a Hellenized form of the Latin *pactum*. In the Hellenistic world this term was used for both a compact of mutual obligations and its connected payments. The Muslims used this expression specifically for the tribute that was raised by Christian Nubia.[44] It is obvious that the terminology used here for the agreement, or the obligations rooted in it, originated in the world of the surrendering party – that is, the Nubians – who chose to use the common and well-known Greek term, and also contributed their perception of a surrender agreement which originated in their case in the Graeco-Roman culture embedded in Egypt. The Nubian *baqt* is of special importance as its authenticity is well-demonstrated by a papyrus from the mid-eighth century. The concept of the *baqt* was so strong that it survived for centuries, long after its original meaning was forgotten.[45] The Syriac terminology used regarding the events of the Muslim conquests in the *Chronicon ad 1234* also reflects the same familiar ancient terminology.[46] It should be added here that, when drawing up these documents in the Arabic language, the Muslims introduced their own terminology as well, thus adapting these agreements to their own language, tradition, and mentality when it suited them. This terminology included terms such as *dhimma*, which became the most dominant expression in their relationship with non-Muslims, the expression *la yasullu wa-la yaghullu*, which appears in the 'vassal-treaty' type (see below) and in the Hudaybiyya agreement, the provision of *nasiha* (advice), which appears in *ʿahd al-umma* (commonly known as the 'Constitution of Medina'), and others.

The procedure of surrendering

Like their Graeco-Roman predecessors, Muslim commanders made a distinction between conquest of a city by force (*ʿanwatan*) or through an agreement (*sulhan*). The Arabic sources describe a process analogous to the process known from the pre-Islamic Near East: once a city surrendered, it received an *aman=pistis/fides/melta*. The granting of an *aman* was usually accompanied by a document listing the conditions that were agreed upon in the *sulh*, or peace agreement. The relevant terms are *kitab*, *kitab aman*, *ʿahd*, *sulh*, and the verbs *wa-salhuhum ʿala*; *ishtaratuhum ʿala*, *qataʿuhum ʿala*, *aʿtuhum aman ʿala*, *amanuhum ʿala*, followed by the conditions.[47] This was therefore a conditional surrender, which was often accompanied by a written agreement: *homologia*, *pakton/pactum*, *qeyama*, or *ketaba*, Arabic *kitab*, *ʿahd*, *ʿaqd*.

The process of obtaining a surrender agreement is well exemplified by the case of the city of Marw al-rudh, located 260 kilometres south-east of Marw, which, having rebelled against the conquerors, surrendered in AH 32/652 CE. According to al-Tabari's (d. 923) description, the inhabitants were besieged and finally surrendered.[48] An ambassador representing the *marzuban* of Marw al-rudh emerged from the

city with a letter, asking the Muslims for safe conduct, and they gave their consent (*aminuni fa-amanuhu*). The letter expressed submission to the Muslims: 'We praise God, in whose hands are the turns of fortune, who transfers kingship as he pleases.' The letter then proceeded to ask for 'peace terms with you'[49] on the [same] lines as my grandfather's submission'. The *marzuban*'s letter then proceeded to lay out specific terms including the payment of 60,000 *dirham*s to the Muslims, the confirmation of his control over the territory and possessions given to his great-grandfather by Khusro as a reward for killing the serpent that was intimidating the inhabitants of the area at the time, the exemption of all the members of his household from tribute, and an assurance of his title as *marzuban* of the area: 'I have sent you my nephew Mahak to seek a pact with you concerning my requests.'

The surrender was thus offered depending on acceptance of the conditions stipulated in the letter. Al-Ahnaf, the commander of the Muslims, then gives his consent to the terms presented, citing them one by one. He also added his own condition: 'You, together with the heavy cavalry who are with you, are likewise obliged to aid the Muslims and fight their enemies … in return you are owed the aid of the Muslims.' Once both sides had consented, the agreement was witnessed, dated, signed, and sealed.[50]

We see here a case of conquest through surrender (*sulhan*) in which the procedure of the surrender on terms, familiar from the Graeco-Roman tradition, is clearly followed. It is evident here that these are written agreements, made on a basis of a written letter of surrender.

Actual copies of the agreements

Early Muslim literature often mentions the existence of copies (*nusakh*, sing. *nuskha*) of these agreements, and some of the versions cited are claimed to have been copied from such copies. Thus, regarding the agreement of Maqna, al-Baladhuri (d. *c.* 900) says: 'An Egyptian told me that he saw with his own eye their agreement (*kitabuhum*) on a red parchment, the writing partly effaced, and he copied it and he dictated it to me as follows.'[51] Although these reports should not be taken at face value, they nevertheless indicate that the actual existence of written copies was taken for granted.

Referring to the existence of written agreements in Egypt, Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam (d. 871) cites a tradition in the name of ʿUbayd Allah b. Abi Jaʿfar (d. *c.* 749–53), who said that there were three people who kept a copy of the *ʿahd* with ʿAmr, stating their names and their dwelling place.[52] He also adduces a conflicting tradition transmitted by Zayd b. Aslam (d. 754) according to which ʿAmr had 'a wooden box (*tabut*) in which he held all the agreements he made, and there was no agreement from Egypt there'.[53] This contradiction illustrates well enough that information regarding these copies was often not dependable. Yet it does suggest that agreements were indeed written, and that the documents were expected to be kept by both parties.

The agreements were renewed when a new governor was appointed, or when a new caliph came into power.[54] This, too, is in line with the Graeco-Roman model, in which agreements were to be renewed upon the death of one of the parties. If we are to judge by the agreements cited by Abu ʿUbayd (d. 839), al-Baladhuri, or al-Tabari, there must have been ample copies of such agreements. Having said this, it is of

course quite likely that not all the agreements were zealously renewed. Rather, it may be assumed that this often occurred when there were relevant issues at hand which prompted one party or the other to insist upon a renewal of the contract.[55]

That the original agreements were considered legally binding is noted by the sources. In an incident in Damascus around 800 reported by Ibn ʿAsakir (d. 1176) the Christians complain to the *qadi* that the agreement of protection regarding their churches had been violated by the Muslims. After verifying the genuineness of the agreement, the *qadi* orders that the churches be returned or compensated for.[56] The same view is also expressed by Abu Yusuf (d. 798) in his *Kitab al-Kharaj*, and by al-Shafiʿi (d. 820) in *Kitab al-Umm*, who both insist that the *ʿuhud* were binding legal documents.[57] This is especially striking if we consider that the agreements were first and foremost documents assuring the protection of the *dhimmi*s: their lives, their personal and public property, and their religious freedom. In fact, by the time of Abu Yusuf and Yahya b. Hamza (d. 799–800), the *qadi* of Damascus, these agreements often seemed an encroachment upon the rights of the Muslims. Nevertheless, they were respected by the Muslim authorities.

The structure of the agreements

Wadad al-Qadi has demonstrated that the structure of the agreements is uniform, and usually includes most of the following elements: the *basmala*; the names of the giver/s and the receiver/s of the *aman*; the territory included; the stipulations; the witnesses; the scribe; the date; the signatures; and, in several cases, the seal. Al-Qadi notes that the uniformity of the structure supports the authenticity of the documents.[58] Indeed, this formal legal structure of the *aman* agreements as well as their elaboration and sophistication, which made them so suspect in the eyes of many, was in fact not a late anachronistic invention of Muslim jurists, but rather an adaptation of the common Near Eastern tradition, specifically the Graeco-Roman tradition in the East.

The characteristics of the agreements

The extant versions of agreements made by the Muslim conquerors comprise several elements which are common in pre-Islamic Near Eastern treaties too.

a) Oath formulae

Ancient treaties were witnessed by the gods, and were secured through invocations of the gods, oaths, and imprecations.[59] In several Muslim agreements we find the formulae *shahida Allah wa-malaʾikatuhu* (God and his angels have witnessed)[60] or *shahida Allah wa-malaʾikatuhu, wa-kafa bi-Allahi shahidan* (God and his angels have witnessed, and God is a sufficient witness).[61] In many others, the *dhimma* is not *dhimmatu l-muslimin* but that of Allah and his Prophet. Thus, for example, in the agreement with Misr:[62]

> For the terms of this document (*ʿala ma fi hadha al-kitab*) the covenant of Allah and his protection and that of his Messenger (*ʿahd Allah wa-dhimmatuhu*

wa-dhimmatu rasulihi), and that of the Caliph, the Commander of the Faithful, as well as the protection of the Believers, are guarantees.[63]

The involvement of the deities is especially accentuated in the case of the Nubian *baqt* as cited by al-Maqrizi, where the need to secure the covenant through a binding oath by both parties, each to his own deity, seems especially significant and noteworthy.[64]

As stated above, in the later Roman and Byzantine periods many of the treaties were no longer witnessed by the gods.[65] This is also true of many Muslim agreements, which merely have the *basmala* invocation at the head of the document.

b) Stipulations

The stipulations themselves may be divided into two different types, both of which seem to have had their origins in the ancient traditions of the 'surrender treaty' and the 'vassal treaty'.

The 'surrender treaty' model represents the total surrender of the inhabitants of the city, which would thenceforth be ruled by the Muslims.[66] It is found in most of the agreements regarding the cities in Egypt, Syria, and Mesopotamia, including agreements relating to Ruha, Damascus, Misr, al-Hira, Ardabil, Bihqubadh, Baalbek, Jerusalem, Ludd, and Filastin, and it appears to emanate from a Roman–Byzantine model. It is basically a *kitab aman* enumerating the obligations of protection that the Muslims take upon themselves, including (in various combinations) the protection and safety of the inhabitants of the city, their children, monks, priests, property, mills, churches, monasteries, and crosses; and the obligation to allow them to hold onto their ancestral customs (*milal wa-shara'i'*),[67] and not to coerce them to accept Islam in return for the payment of *jizya*.

In some cases, as in the treaty of Bihqubadh, it is phrased simply as, 'we owe you protection and you owe us *jizya*',[68] or, in the case of al-Hira: 'He made an agreement with them in return for the payment of 190,000 *dirham*s ... and [their] protection.' This payment was to be made on a yearly basis. In addition, the agreement expressly says that if they are not defended as promised, they need not pay their dues until their defence is restored.[69]

This model does not, in fact, demand anything from the surrendering city other than the recognition of Muslim rule in the form of the payment of *jizya*, while the obligations of the Muslims are in most cases (though not in these last two) enumerated in detail. Such agreements, which were probably the most any surrendering city could wish for, are attested in the Graeco-Roman tradition.[70]

The 'vassal treaty' model acknowledges the continuity of the local leadership under Muslim sovereignty. It is attested in the agreements in the area of Iran, including Jurjan, Tiflis, Mah Dinar, Mah Bahradhan, Isfahan, al-Rayy, Qumis, Tabaristan wa-Jiljilan, Adharbayjan, Marw al-rudh, Armenia, Herat with Badghis and Bushanj, and Muqan (see Figure 10.1). It includes all the elements of the previous model, and contains further stipulations imposed on the conquered inhabitants rather than upon the conquering Muslims, giving the agreement a more reciprocal character.

These stipulations include several obligations: 1) 'to give sincere counsel and military aid to the Muslims';[71] or, in another form, 'to give counsel and hospitality',[72] or

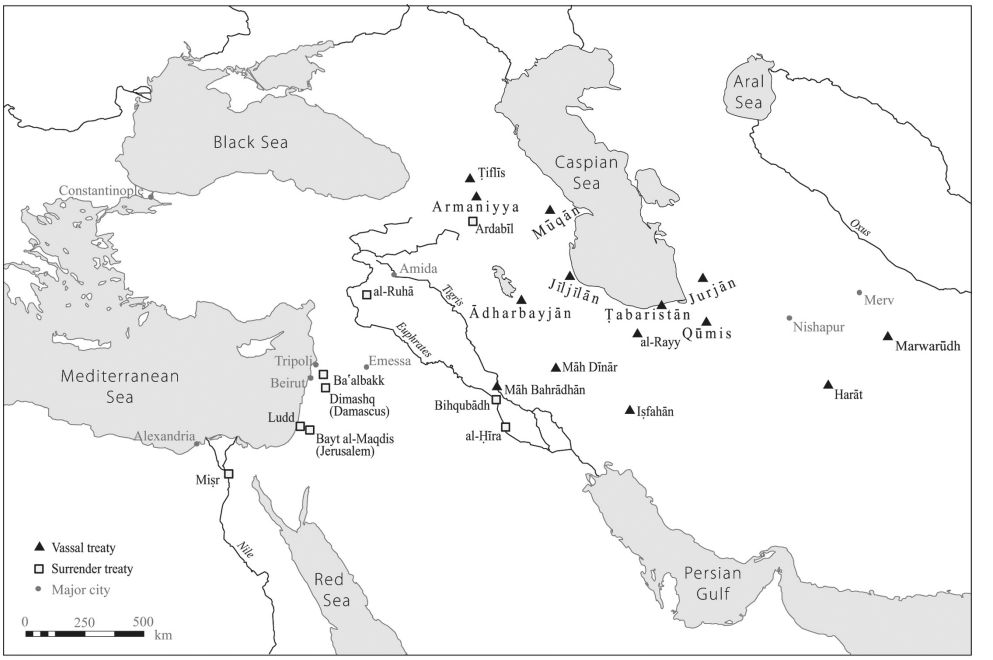

Figure 10.1 Map of 'surrender treaties' and 'vassal treaties' in the Muslim conquests.

'to give advice and not conceal anything';[73] 2) 'to be loyal';[74] 3) 'to serve as guides to the Muslims';[75] 4) 'to give hospitality to a Muslim in need of it';[76] and 5) 'to take care of the roads and bridges in their territory'.[77]

Clauses regarding loyalty, military assistance, additional aid, the return of fugitives, and the obligation to show the way feature in ancient Near Eastern treaties.[78] These elements are also common in defensive alliances made during the Hellenistic and Roman periods, often between cities of equal standing (*isopoliteia*), which promise to assist each other in case of attack or war (*symmachia*),[79] or between Rome and cities or countries that had submitted to Roman rule (*foedus iniquum*).[80] As already noted, the information regarding the Byzantine period is not as detailed, since no copies or versions of treaties have come down to us due to the transition from stone and bronze inscriptions to papyri. Yet the sources indicate that this tradition continued to exist throughout the Byzantine period, and that issues of military assistance and loyalty played a central role in treaties with Goths and the Huns, as well as with the Arabs.[81]

However, that the Muslims used the vassal treaty specifically in regions that had previously been part of the Sasanian Empire and, as far as can be detected, not elsewhere, may indicate that the direct model was a type of treaty used by the Sasanian shahs in their dealings with their feudal lords.[82] Thus, this type of treaty may have represented an Iranian branch of the vassal-treaty model.

The obligations included in this type of treaty indicate that the relevant party ruled a wider territory than just a city and its vicinities. The most significant feature is the existence of an army which could be of assistance to the Muslims; in addition, the area comprised roads and bridges (plural), a feature characteristic of a region rather

than a city. Most important, however, the majority of the names included in this list are of regions rather than cities, that is, Jurjan, Mah Dinar, Mah Bahradhan, Qumis, Tabaristan wa-Jiljilan, Adharbayjan, Armenia, and Muqan, while the names of the cities mentioned (Tiflis, Isfahan, al-Rayy, and Marw al-rudh) may well be the capitals of their regions.

The existence of Sasanian signed documents which constituted contracts of investiture has been convincingly shown by Widengren,[83] who has noted that signed documents of investiture (an edict and a seal – *ʿahd-u muhr*; *manshur* – letters patent; *ʿahd* pact) are ceremoniously awarded to the feudal rulers are mentioned in Firdausi's *Shah-nama* in several places.[84] In fact the feudal chiefs, the Great Ones, the Nobles and the Princes carried significant weight in the Sasanian Empire, even more so on the eve of the Muslim conquest; it is therefore no surprise that they continued to do so after the conquest, and demanded that the *status quo ante* be kept.[85]

c) Payments and gifts accompanying surrender

Another feature appearing in agreements with Muslims, which is typical of the traditional agreements, is the custom of handing over to the conquerors a large sum of money or gifts.[86] Examples of this are Alexandria,[87] Jurjan, and Qaliqala.[88] Apparently, in some cases, the surrendering inhabitants continued their long-standing custom of sending, along with their envoys, large sums of money or gifts to appease the conquerors.

Detailed agreements

As already mentioned, most scholars claim that the minute details appearing in the agreements make them suspicious: in fact, the more detailed the agreement, the less likely they deem it to be authentic and trustworthy. Yet, as noted above, long and detailed agreements were quite common in the pre-Islamic Near East. The treaties between Rome and Carthage, for example, included a definition of a maritime boundary between the two.[89] In the comprehensive agreement signed between Rome and Antiochus III the territories to be evacuated are defined; it is specifically stated that he could take his weapons only, and a time limit was set for all those who wished to return to the liberated territories (just as would be done in the Alexandria and the Jerusalem agreements, as will be shown below). The size and equipment of his army was limited and defined, and a large fine was imposed on him.[90]

This continued during the Byzantine period. To mention just a few examples, the treaty with Attila, mentioned above, was a very detailed one;[91] the treaty made between Rome and Persia in 298 included a minute description of the territories to be handed over to the Romans, a detailed definition of the boundary line, and the fixing of Nisibis as a sole trading point.[92] The treaty made between the Byzantines and the Persians in 562 is also long and detailed, and includes a long series of stipulations.[93]

It should not surprise us, therefore, that such comprehensive agreements were drawn up following the Arabian conquests, especially in the case of important cities. These listed precisely the stipulations presented both by the inhabitants of the city and by the Muslim conquerors, depending on the specific conditions in each case.

THE TREATY OF ALEXANDRIA

John of Nikiu describes the capitulation of Cyrus, bishop of Alexandria to the Muslims on 8 November 641, and enumerates the conditions of the agreement they reached.[94] Although he does not actually cite the treaty, he does adduce its contents in detail. The treaty of Alexandria includes specific matters and arrangements that were made including the amount of tribute, non-intervention for an agreed period, specific arrangements for the Roman troops' departure, hostages to be taken to ensure the fulfilment of the stipulations, cessation of hostilities, protection of Christians and their prayer houses, and status quo regarding the Jewish population living in the city.

None of these terms are in fact surprising or incredible when compared to stipulations found in earlier agreements. Moreover, John of Nikiu's report, from *c.* 690, is an eyewitness account, free from any later editing.

In addition, as in the Jerusalem agreement discussed below, several of the stipulations had no significance except at the moment of the signing of the agreement: this is true of the arrangements concerning the departure of the Byzantine army; the commitment of the Muslims not to intervene in any matter for 11 months; the special clause stipulating that the Jews of Alexandria might remain in the city; and the clause referring to the hostages taken by the Muslims as a guarantee for the implementation of the agreement.

THE TREATY OF JERUSALEM

The same can be said for the surrender agreement made with the inhabitants of Jerusalem (Iliya), adduced by al-Tabari, citing Sayf b. ʿUmar (d. *c.* 800?), from a pair of authorities whom he never identifies precisely, Khalid and ʿUbada (possibly the Syrian traditionists, Khalid b. Maʿdan al-Kalaʿi al-Himsi (d. c. 721–6) and ʿUbada b. Nusayy al-Kindi al-Urdunni (d. 736)).[95] The agreement includes, besides the usual clauses, specific provisions such as an obligation to expel the Byzantine army and the brigands, and an undertaking by the Muslims to vouch for their safety until they reach their haven; the possibility for the soldiers to remain as inhabitants in the city if they so wish; and permission for any inhabitant who so wishes to leave with the Byzantine army. The text goes here into precise detail, stating that

> those among Iliya's[96] inhabitants who wished to take their possessions and leave the city alongside the Byzantines, thus abandoning both their churches and crosses, (they, and their churches and crosses) will come to no harm until such a time as they reach a place of safety.[97]

Another clause states that the peasants who were in city before the murder of a certain person (*fulan*) may remain in the city as inhabitants. The taxes, it is specified, shall not be levied before the harvest.

Just as in the previous cases, here too we find clauses that have no future implications, and are, in fact, practical arrangements whose purpose is to provide the necessary means for a peaceful transfer of power and for the maintenance of stable rule in the city. Similar clauses pertaining to the opportunity given by the Muslims to leave with the Byzantines appear, for example, in the cases of Fihl and Tiberias.[98]

Especially disputed in the Jerusalem agreement is the clause prohibiting the Jews from living in Jerusalem. Samuel D. Goitein claimed that not just this clause, but the whole version of the agreement, was a forgery.[99] There is, in fact, no reason to believe that this clause is untrustworthy.[100] The absence of Jews from Jerusalem, their former capital and the place of their venerated temple, was considered by the Christians an undeniable proof of the victory of Christianity over Judaism. The possible presence of Jews in Jerusalem was therefore a great threat from the Christians' viewpoint. Given that prohibiting the residence of Jews in Jerusalem was a key element in Christian policy, it is more than possible that the representatives of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, headed most probably by the Patriarch himself, demanded that the Muslims include such a clause in the surrender agreement. It would have preserved the *status quo ante*, which would have been firmly in the interests of the Christians. The actual presence of Jews in the city, just a short while after the conquest, is most probably a result of further negotiations made some time after the signing of the agreement.[101] In addition to the examples from Alexandria and Jerusalem, adduced here, Marw al-rudh, Najran, and Nubia are other cases in which descriptions of detailed agreements have been preserved are.[102]

In sum, detailed agreements should not therefore be considered suspicious and untrustworthy simply for being detailed, for two main reasons. First, such agreements containing long series of clauses were prevalent in the Near East from early times onwards; it is quite clear that the inhabitants of the conquered cities and territories were familiar with such documents and demanded to be given such assurances at the time of capitulation. Second, many of the clauses of the detailed agreements are *bona fide* clauses, reflecting specific issues raised at the time of the conquest, some of them having no relevance whatsoever just a short time after the agreement had been signed and implemented. There is no reason therefore to believe that they were invented at a later date.[103] On the contrary, the detailed agreements strengthen rather than weaken the case for the authenticity of the agreements in general.

CONCLUSION

The formal agreements concluded between the Muslims and the conquered populations in Syria and Palestine, Mesopotamia, and Iran were an additional link in a long tradition of such agreements, common throughout the pre-Islamic world. The Arabians were in fact familiar with this tradition and had already in previous centuries signed *foedera* with the Romans. In addition, the Prophet had signed individual surrender agreements with cities in the Arabian Peninsula before the conquests and beyond it. However, with the advancement of the conquests, the ancient Graeco-Roman tradition was brought to the fore, most probably by the conquered populations' dictating the character of the agreements made between the Muslims and the inhabitants of the cities. The negotiations, the format of the agreement, the terminology, and the nature of the stipulations contained in the Muslim agreements all reflect this long-standing tradition, while the famous term *aman* seems to have been the Arabic form of the basic tenet of all agreements in the pre-Islamic east: the *pistis/fides*. There is therefore no need to suspect these reported agreements; rather, there is good reason to believe that they reflect the original agreements made by the Muslim conquerors with the

local populations, both sides being well aware that this was the accepted mechanism employed on the occasion of surrender to a conquering army.

We cannot, of course, ignore the fact that the versions of the agreements handed down to us by Muslim historians may, at times, be inaccurate, and at others, distorted and tampered with in order to serve certain purposes. Yet the existence of such documents, drawn up between the Muslim conquerors and the conquered populations of the East, cannot be doubted. The inhabitants of the conquered area knew well from their own centuries-long experience that drawing up such documents at the time of surrender was the only means to assure their safety and well-being.

NOTES

1 This chapter is an abbreviated version of material first presented in Levy-Rubin 2011, with some additions on Jerusalem. The appellation *muslimun* during the seventh century seems to have been rare, while the appellation *mu'minun* and *muhajirun* was, according to the existing evidence, much more commonly used. See Crone 1994; Hoyland 1997: 547–8; Donner 2010; Lindstedt 2015; Donner in this volume. For the sake of uniformity and clarity of terms, the term *muslimun* is nonetheless used in this chapter in reference to the seventh century, as there is no doubt that this appellation was in widespread use from the end of the seventh century, and is still in use today.
2 See Noth 1973a; Hill 1971.
3 Fattal 1959: 58.
4 See Noth 1973a: 60–71; al-Qadi 1987: 193–269.
5 Noth 1973a: 314.
6 Noth 1973a: 286.
7 Al-Qadi 1987.
8 On international treaties in the ancient world see Kehne et al. 2010.
9 Kehne et al. 2010. For a survey regarding the Ancient Near East see Magnetti 1978: 815–29; Phillipson 1911: I, 375–419.
10 For example, the treaties with: Carthage, Polybius, *Histories* 3.22; 3.24; 3.25 in Johnson 1961: 7–8 (document 3); Polybius, 3.27, in Johnson 1961: 19 (document 13); Aetolians, Livy 38.11 and Polybius 21.32 in Johnson 1961: 24 (document 24); Antiochus III, Livy 38.38 and Polybius 21.42 in Johnson 1961: 25–6 (document 27).
11 Weinfeld 1973: 190–9.
12 Ibn Hisham 1990: IV, 143.
13 Shaked 1984: 34–5, n. 17.
14 Weinfeld 1973: 15.
15 Dignas and Winter 2007: 119–51; Blockley 1992: 5–66.
16 Blockley 1992: 151–8; Miller 1971: 56–76; Chrysos 1992: 30.
17 Levy-Rubin 2011: 12–15.
18 Blockley 1985: 55–71; the treaty at 71–7.
19 Blockley 1985: 71–7.
20 Blockley (1992: 105–6), notes that their control of southern Mesopotamia had led the Sasanians to adopt the organizational, administrative, and legalistic skills prevalent there, including the diplomatic practices.
21 Levy-Rubin 2011: 16–17.
22 Levy-Rubin 2011: 18–21.
23 Rubin 1988: 41; Levy-Rubin 2011: 18–19.
24 Priscus in Blockley 1981: 224–7.

25 Levy-Rubin 2011: 21–4.
26 See Phillipson 1911: II, 239–41; Onasander 1977: 492–9 (chap. 37–8).
27 Kehne et al. 2010.
28 Lewis and Short 1879: 747, s.v. I. *fides,* IIB (esp. IIB2).
29 Phillipson 1911: I, 391.
30 Badian 2010.
31 Levy-Rubin 2011: 24, n. 110.
32 Shahal 2005.
33 Phillipson 1911: 380.
34 Liddell and Scott 1948: s.v. *homologia*, no. 3.
35 Shahal 2005: 48.
36 Shahal 2005: 34, citing Polybius, *Histories* 36.9.15 and Cicero, *Pro Balbo* 15, respectively.
37 Shahal 2005: 40, citing Cicero, *Pro Balbo* 29.
38 Levy-Rubin 2011: 26–32.
39 Lane 1984: 101B.
40 Tyan 1954–56: I, 426.
41 *EI2*, 'Aman' (J. Schacht).
42 Levy-Rubin 2011: 33–4.
43 Levy-Rubin 2011: 32–4.
44 *EI2*, 'Baqt' (F. Løkkegaard).
45 Hinds and Sakkout 1981; Levy-Rubin 2011: 34–5; 41–2; esp. 55–6.
46 Levy-Rubin 2011: 35–6.
47 Al-Qadi 1987: 251–67.
48 Al-Tabari 1879–1901: I, 2897–901; translation, al-Tabari 1990: 102–5.
49 On this term see Lecker 2004: 204–5.
50 See also the cases of Jurjan and Dabil: al-Baladhuri 1866: 201; translation, al-Baladhuri 1916: I, 315–16.
51 Al-Baladhuri 1866: 60. For the case of Najran see: al-Baladhuri 1866: 64–5.
52 Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1994: 85.
53 Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1994: 89.
54 Al-Qadi 1987: 217–18.
55 Levy-Rubin 2011: 38–40.
56 Ibn ʿAsakir 1995–2000: II, 354–5.
57 Levy-Rubin 2005.
58 Al-Qadi 1987: 223–8.
59 Phillipson 1911: I, 385–90.
60 For versions of the Ruha agreement: al-Qadi 1987: 251; Cohen 1999: 143.
61 Al-Qadi 1987: 256 (Tiflis); 259 (Baalbek)).
62 Probably referring to Babylon/Memphis (Manf): Beihammer 2000: 64, n. 156.
63 Al-Tabari 1879–1901: I, 2588–9; translation, al-Tabari 1989: 171.
64 Al-Maqrizi 1853: I, 199.
65 They were, however, placed in the temples of the gods: Johnson 1961: 58–9 (documents 53, 54).
66 For the treaties see al-Qadi 1987: appendix.
67 See, for example, in the case of Jurjan, al-Qadi 1987: 255; Mah Dinar, al-Qadi 1987: 260; Mah Bahradhan, al-Qadi 1987: 261; Qumis, al-Qadi 1987: 263; Adharbayjan, al-Qadi 1987: 264; Muqan, al-Qadi 1987: 266.
68 Al-Qadi 1987: 258.
69 Al-Qadi 1987: 258.
70 Levy-Rubin 2011: 42–5.
71 Al-Qadi 1987: 256, Tiflis, Marw al-rudh.

72 Al-Qadi 1987: 256, Tiflis.
73 Al-Qadi 1987: 263, Qumis.
74 Al-Qadi 1987: 266, Muqan.
75 Al-Qadi 1987: 256, 257, 261, 266.
76 Al-Qadi 1987: 256, Tiflis.
77 Al-Qadi 1987: 251 (al-Ruha); 260 (al-Ruha, another version); 261 (Mah Bahradhan); the Herat treaty has: *wa-islah ma taht yadayhi* (al-Qadi 1987: 265); also, Abu Yusuf Yaʿqub 1933: 138.
78 Pritchard 1969: 203–5; 660–1; 534–41.
79 Bengston 1960–69: III.
80 For example, the treaty between Rome and the Aetolians, Johnson 1961: 24 (document 24), 25–6 (document 27), 32 (document 35), 92 (document 110).
81 Levy-Rubin 2011: 16–21.
82 The use of the terms such as 'vassal' or 'feudal' see Levy-Rubin 2011: 194, n. 244.
83 Widengren 1956: 89–95.
84 Firdausi 1988–2008: II, 62, vv. 847–8; (translation Firdawsi 1876: I, 448); Firdausi 1988–2008: II, 63–4, vv. 860–71; (translation Firdawsi 1876: I, 449); Firdausi 1988–2008: IV, 355–8, vv. 2870–915 (translation Firdawsi 1877: IV, 201–6); Thomson 1980: 236; Thomson 1985: 116.
85 For a more detailed survey see Levy-Rubin 2011: 47–50.
86 For examples see Levy-Rubin 2011: 29, 30, 43.
87 Charles 1916: ch. 120, para. 27.
88 Levy-Rubin 2011: 30, 37.
89 Johnson 1961: 7–8 (document 3).
90 Johnson 1961: 25–6 (document 27).
91 Levy-Rubin 2011: 17.
92 Peter the Patrician fragments 13–14 translated in Dignas and Winter 2007: 124.
93 Blockley 1985: 70–3; Dignas and Winter 2007: 141–3.
94 Charles 1916: ch. 120, paras. 17–21.
95 On the Jerusalem agreement see al-Tabari 1879–1901: I, 2403–6; Gil 1992, paras. 68–9. For the possible but problematic identification of the traditionists in the *isnad*, see al-Tabari 1993, 81, n. 462, with further references.
96 The name given to the Roman colony established in Jerusalem in 136 CE.
97 Al-Tabari 1879–1901: I, 2406; translation al-Tabari: 1992, 192, n. 711.
98 Al-Azdi 1970: 140. In the case of Tiberias, Shurahbil b. Hasana made the usual agreement and 'guaranteed the inhabitants the safety of their lives, possessions, children, churches, and houses', with 'the exception of what they abandoned and left behind them'; see al-Baladhuri 1866: 115.
99 Goitein 1980: 36–42; rejected by Gil 1992: 51–6.
100 Levy-Rubin 2009: 63–81.
101 Levy-Rubin 2009.
102 For a detailed description and discussion of these see Levy-Rubin 2011: 53–6.
103 See Noth 1973a: 286–90.

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PART III

REGIONS OF THE UMAYYAD WORLD

Conquest, Society and Economy

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CHAPTER ELEVEN

THE UMAYYAD NORTH[1] (Or: How Umayyad was the Umayyad Caliphate?)

Alison M. Vacca

In the seventh century Armenia and Caucasian Albania formed the Umayyad North,[2] a province that stretched from Erzurum in modern Turkey to the Caspian Sea, and as far north as Darband in modern Daghestan and Tbilisi, in Georgia (see Figure 11.1). After the Islamic incursions in the 640s, early caliphs followed Sasanian and Byzantine precedent to install presiding princes over Armenia, Albania, and Georgia. This suggests a model of rule whereby the caliph presided from afar but allowed the local elite to rule themselves. At first glance, it seems possible to project Armenia and Albania[3] as 'external challenges', tributary neighbors, or loosely affiliated allies, not invested or integrated into the Umayyad Caliphate in the way we might see in the 'lowland provinces'.[4]

Yet, despite the considerable autonomy allowed to Armenians, Arabs, Georgians, and Albanians who inhabited the North, the Umayyads were not absentee rulers. They sent governors to the North and fought extended wars against the peoples of the Caucasus, namely the Khazars and Alans. Modern scholars catalogue post-reform coinage and collect evidence of censuses, taxes, and treaties. Armenian sources tell of the princes and nobles who headed to the royal court as diplomats or hostages. Further, the Umayyad family itself was heavily involved in governing, settling, building, and defending the North. Muhammad b. Marwan, Maslama b. ʿAbd al-Malik, and Marwan b. Muhammad served as governors over Armenia and Albania. The presence of these scions of the Umayyad house in the provincial capitals of the North and on the battlefields of the Caucasus challenges the idea of a far-flung empire only nominally ruled by the Umayyads. Umayyad control of the North was not an idle claim or delusion of empire.

This chapter introduces the Umayyad North by focusing specifically on the involvement of the Umayyad family in governance, diplomacy, and military campaigns. This adds the perspective of a periphery province to broader discussions about the Umayyads, such as regionalism, centralization,[5] and source criticism.

In order to read the Umayyads as part of Armenian and Albanian history in this way, we need to understand the content and concerns of Armenian, Albanian, and Georgian sources. Armenian sources predominate here due to their relative abundance, though Georgian sources also offer interesting perspectives. Most importantly, one Albanian history survives, that attributed to Movses Daskhurantsʿi

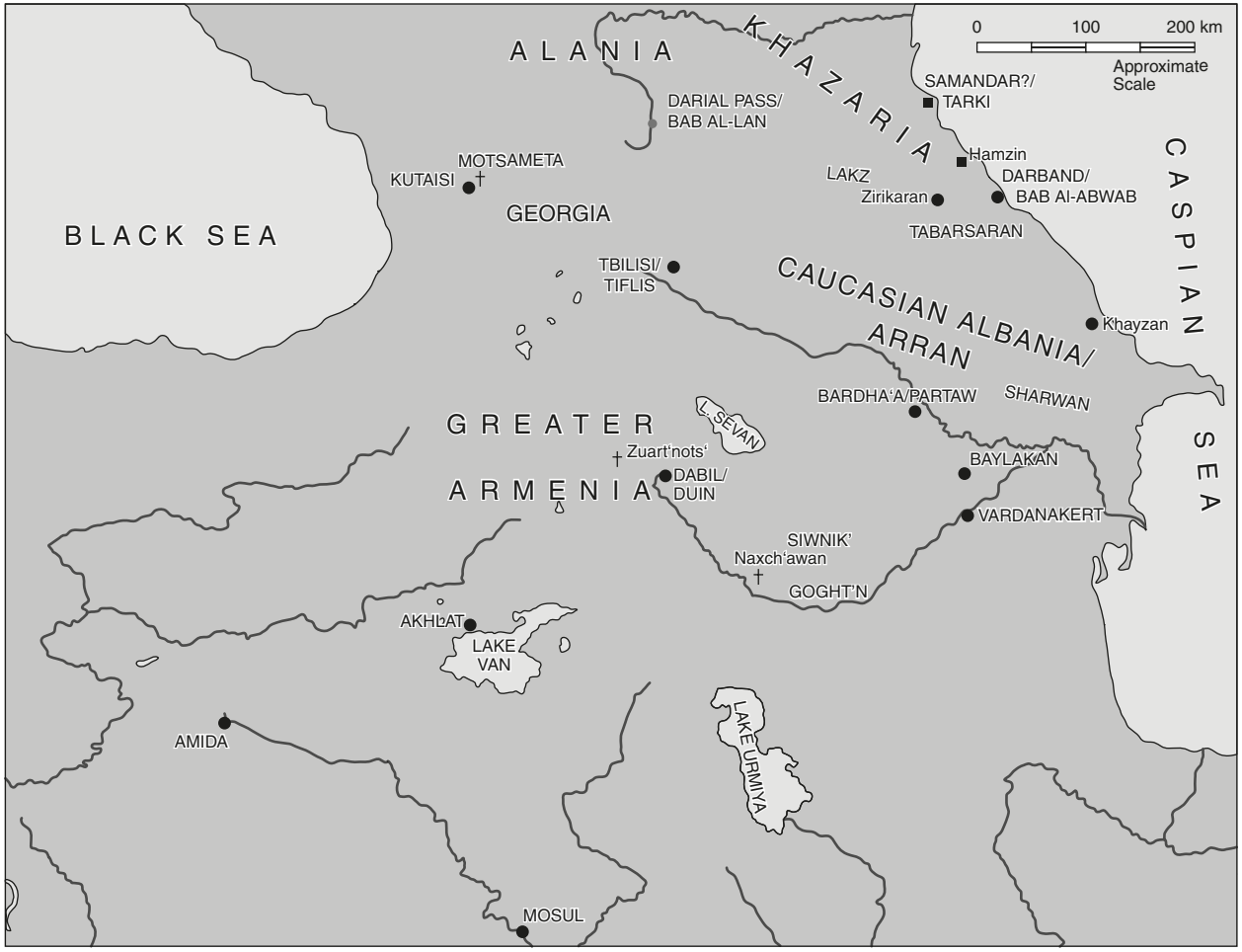

Figure 11.1 Map of the Umayyad North (Armenia, Albania, and Georgia).
Based on R.H. Hewsen and C.C. Salvatico, *Armenia: A Historical Atlas*. Chicago: University of Chicago, 2001.

(fl. tenth century); although composed in Armenian, it focuses on Albania and frequently preserves Albanian insights. These sources, some of which are noticeably earlier than the extant Arabic histories, offer valuable information about 'the troubled and contentious race that dwelt in the region of Damascus'.[6] Yet, writing Umayyad history, whether of the peripheries or of centres, presents a number of methodological challenges. In particular – and most noticeably in Armenian sources – the Umayyads frequently appear in circumstances that allow medieval historians to take sides in local disputes, whether Christological debates, feuds between noble houses, or ambitious local governors trying to curry favor at the royal court. Hence, we should understand some of the accounts of episodes of Umayyad engagements with the leaders of the North as assertions of legitimacy and/or posturing, rather than an embodiment of actual Umayyad policy towards a frontier province.

THE UMAYYAD FAMILY AND THE UMAYYAD NORTH

Muʿawiya b. Abi Sufyan

Stories about Muʿawiya in these sources tend towards the positive. Muʿawiya first appears in Armenian sources as governor of Syria (r. 639–61) and the 'prince of the Ismaelite army' fighting Byzantium.[7] In this position, he was responsible for overseeing the conquest of Armenia.[8] Pseudo-Sebeos explains that the Arab-Armenian peace treaty (*c.* 652) was between the Prince of Armenia T'eodoros Rshtuni (r. 639–54) and 'the prince of Ismael', a title that usually implies the caliph but here refers to Muʿawiya as governor.[9] The treaty was advantageous for the Armenians, as it promised the remission of taxes for three years, followed by taxation 'as much as you may wish [read, "are able"]'.[10] It also promised that no Arab troops or commanders (*amir*s) would set foot in Armenia, nor would the caliph request Armenian troops to come to Syria. The treaty required Armenians to maintain their cavalry and promised aid should they face Byzantine aggression.

At the conclusion of this treaty, Armenia might technically be understood as Umayyad territory, though given the terms of the treaty and the evidence from written sources it is unlikely that Armenians faced any substantial changes during the Sufyanid period. Further, not all of the nobles of the North acknowledged the validity of this treaty. Some of the Armenian nobles, the Georgians, and the Albanians refused to recognize the 'pact with death' and chose instead to honor 'the divine covenant' with Byzantium.[11] T'eodoros, though, was invested in this 'alliance with hell' and travelled to the caliphal court where he was met with honors:

> After this T'eodoros, the lord of the Rshtunik', went to Muʿawiya the prince of Ismael in Damascus, and visited him with grand presents. The prince of Ismael gave him robes of gold embroidered with gold and a banner of his own pattern. He gave him the rank of prince of Armenia, Iberia, Aghuank' [Albania], and Siwnik', as far as the Caucasus mountain and the Pass of Chor [near Darband]. Then he dismissed him with honour. He had made a pact with him to bring that land into subjection.[12]

This passage suggests that Muʿawiya saw the North as a single province, to be ruled by a single prince, though the reality was far more complicated; T'eodoros may not have claimed much more than Rshtuni territories in southern Armenia.[13] Shortly thereafter, in 655, Armenians rallied to an alliance with Byzantium and 'the king of Ismael' subsequently put 1,775 hostages to the sword.[14] This is not blamed on Muʿawiya, but on the Umayyad caliph ʿUthman (r. 644–56), and the slaughter of hostages contrasts sharply with usual accounts of Muʿawiya in positive terms.

According to Armenian sources, Muʿawiya (r. 661–80) became caliph during the first *fitna* (656–61) by killing the previous caliph, then he 'established peace throughout the entire land', meaning over the entire Caliphate.[15] Most of the information on Muʿawiya's reign as caliph centres on the extrication of Armenia from Byzantine politics, but we also hear of taxation and hostages designed to maintain the submission of the North under Umayyad control. Muʿawiya demanded taxes and the Albanians responded by sending a bishop to negotiate, claiming hardships already placed on Albania in maintaining the frontier.[16] Muʿawiya also received hostages from the Armenian nobility 'at the royal court', but one year later he returned one of the hostages to serve as the Prince of Armenia and Georgia.[17]

Several Armenian sources record that the peaceful circumstances of Muʿawiya's reign allowed the construction of a number of churches. For example, Ghewond, an Armenian priest who wrote a history of the Caliphate towards the end of the eighth century, reported on the construction of the church of St. Grigor (the famous Zuart'nots', see Figure 11.2) at this time and noted that 'there was great peace during

Figure 11.2 The ruins of Zuart'nots', near the modern Erevan, Armenia. By permission of Burt Johnson/Alamy Stock Photo.

the days of his reign'.[18] Muʿawiya does not personally deserve credit for the flowering of Armenian architecture, which should instead be understood as the result of his hands-off governance and no-*amir* policy that allowed Armenians a period of peace during which they focused on their own interests.

Muʿawiya reportedly enjoyed close relations with the Albanians. At the time of the Islamic conquests, the general (and, later, prince) of Albania Juansher fought for the Sasanians. Following Qadisiyya (636), Juansher retreated to Albania to recoup, in part through advantageous alliances with the Byzantines, Armenians, and Khazars. His most celebrated alliance, though, was with Muʿawiya, 'the King of the South'. Daskhurants'i notes the establishment of Umayyad power in Damascus:

> He who settled there began to suck the marrow of the land around him, and to him [the caliph] were given strong and extensive powers, political wisdom, lenient authority, and human kindness, and with these four qualities he ruled the four corners of the earth.[19]

This description confirms the perception of Muʿawiya as distant and hands-off, as described in the Armenian sources. Daskhurants'i also claims that Juansher travelled to the caliphal court, where Muʿawiya offered him 'a treaty of sincere and perpetual friendship', providing honors that surpassed those extended to any other foreigner. Daskhurants'i further claims that Juansher returned to the caliphal court some years later, this time the recipient of even more gifts and honors, including an elephant, garments, weapons, and a much-admired parrot.[20] These passages assert the importance of Albanian elite in the Umayyad venture, while confirming the relative independence of the North as well as the norms of diplomacy at a moment when alliances held the edges of empire together.

ʿAbd al-Malik and Muhammad b. Marwan

After the second *fitna* (683–92), during which Armenia, Albania, and Georgia rebelled against Umayyad rule, ʿAbd al-Malik (r. 685/692–705) embraced a more centralized model of governance. The Albanian historian Daskhurants'i speaks highly of ʿAbd al-Malik as an ally of the Armenians and non-Chalcedonian Albanians. He furnishes letters between the Armenian catholicos and the Umayyad caliph to discuss the spread of Chalcedonianism in Albania, placing blame for such folly on the intrigues of the Albanian catholicos Nerses and the Queen of Albania, Spram. ʿAbd al-Malik responded to the Armenian catholicos by promising 'a great army' to force Albanians back to miaphysitism and to mete out punishment for Nerses and Spram. According to this, the Umayyad caliphs not only favored non-Chalcedonian Christianity, but also committed troops to cauterize the spread of Chalcedonianism. In some ways, this engagement ties to the threads of the Marwanid reforms, as Daskhurants'i then adds the establishment of the registry (*diwan*) in Albania during the reign of ʿAbd al-Malik. He justifies the *diwan* as confirmation of miaphysitism and adds a renewed exhortation that ʿAbd al-Malik would punish those who converted:

> All these names were written in the *diwan* of Abdlmelk‘ Amir Mumin[21] in order that if any of them were found to have become duophysites, they might be destroyed by the sword or imprisonment. Thus was peace achieved in all the churches of Albania.[22]

This Albanian text places the caliph in direct collaboration with the Armenian and Albanian Churches and paints him as a defender of non-Chalcedonian Christianity, although Arabic sources certainly do not corroborate either claim.

Armenian sources, by contrast, vaunt few of the merits of ʿAbd al-Malik. ʿAbd al-Malik’s ‘heart was yet again inflamed by the evil-loving Satan’, so he sent his ‘blood-thirsty and devil-possessed’ brother Muhammad b. Marwan (d. 719–20) to the North in 695–6.[23] One source identifies Muhammad as ‘a Persian general’ who was ‘a fierce and warlike man, to whom he [the caliph] entrusted the whole empire’.[24] Ghewond offers no explanation for the campaign into the North beyond the caliph’s callous nature. After Muhammad wrought significant damage in Armenia, he returned to court.

Muhammad b. Marwan returned to the North two years later, *c.* 697–8,[25] and reached Ch‘oghay near Darband. ‘He completely devastated all the land of Armenia and passed into the land of the Xazark‘’.[26] In the same year ‘infidels’ (for which, read Muslims) were harassing the clergy at the Armenian church Zuart‘nots‘. Ghewond claims that the Muslims were struck by irrepressible envy over the godly lifestyle of the clergy and so killed one of their own colleagues and framed the clergy for his death. The Muslims sought Muhammad b. Marwan to serve as judge, writing to him for instructions: ‘They did such-and-such to us. Now what sort of death shall we deal them?’[27] Muhammad gave them leave to execute their own punishment, so they tortured and crucified the clergymen and took the church’s goods as booty. Muhammad b. Marwan then returned to Syria.

When he next returns to Armenia, the impression of Muhammad b. Marwan veers unexpectedly positive. His next assignment in the North immediately followed the Battle of Vardanakert (*c.* 703), when the Kamsarakan family challenged and resoundingly defeated the local Arab troops in the region of Shirak. The few remaining defeated Arabs fled the battle to arrive under the protection of an Armenian noblewoman named Lady Shushan, who stood up to the Armenian forces bent on putting the survivors to the sword. Lady Shushan healed the wounds of the surviving Arabs and sent them with gifts to the caliph, ʿAbd al-Malik. ‘For this she received many thanks from him and he sent her great gifts.’[28]

This exchange between Shushan and ʿAbd al-Malik did not stem the violence, though, and soon thereafter the Armenians decimated another Arab raiding party. Upon receiving the news of this second encounter, ʿAbd al-Malik yet again dispatched his brother Muhammad to bring the rebellious province into line. Before Muhammad even arrived in Armenia, though, the Armenian catholicos preemptively sought to still his hand and so travelled to Harran at the behest of the Armenian nobility. The catholicos Sahak died before meeting Muhammad, but left a letter to beg for clemency. Muhammad, reportedly so impressed by the catholicos’s piety and courage, greeted the catholicos’s corpse with respect and spoke to it, saying:

> I recognize your wisdom from the letter that I read, for like a brave shepherd keeping watch over your flock, you hastened to come before my imperious

> sword. I am convinced to stay my sword from innocent men. Now I will do and fulfill everything that you once entreated of me so the blessing of your piety may rest over me. If I should err in one thing from all your words, may all the curses that I read in your letter come upon me.[29]

With a written oath, he pardoned the Armenians involved at Vardanakert and sent Sahak's body back to be buried in his ancestral tomb. This positive notice – not only of Muhammad, but also of ʿAbd al-Malik – is incongruous with the rest of the Armenian recounting of their conduct, but it provides a model for other stories about caliphal engagement with the Church hierarchy.

Three years later (that is, in about 706), Muhammad b. Marwan is said to have returned to Armenia to quell yet another rebellion, this time facing combined Greek and Armenian forces. At this time, Muhammad ordered the Armenian nobles and their troops into a church in the city of Naxch'awan, barred the doors, and burned the churches down. In some versions, all of the nobles burned alive; in other versions, Muhammad ordered the nobles to be extracted from the church, tortured for their treasures, then killed, so the fires burned only their troops. This story predominates as the main memory of Muhammad b. Marwan in the North and Armenian historians unsurprisingly record the burning of the church with unremitting rancor.[30] Following the fires, Muhammad sent many captives to Damascus, where the nobles were kept at the court, the children were trained in some skill, and others were sold as slaves. One of these children, Vahan Goght'nets'i, was trained as a scribe in the *diwan* and will return to our story during the reigns of both ʿUmar and Hisham.[31] When Muhammad returned to Damascus to die in shame, Daskhurants'i claims that the earth refused to admit his corpse and spat it out three times. They only succeeded in burying Muhammad by tying his body to a dead dog, thus tricking the earth into accepting such pollution.

After the death of Muhammad b. Marwan, the Prince of Albania and some Albanian nobles are said to have been sent to Syria. The dating here is uncertain. Daskhurants'i claims that they left for Armenia in 153 of the Armenian era (6 June 704–5 June 705),[32] so during the reign of ʿAbd al-Malik. They arrived in Syria the next year, so this could have been either ʿAbd al-Malik or his son al-Walid. This dating is problematic because Muhammad b. Marwan died only later, during the Caliphate of ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAziz.[33]

ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAziz

Though Armenian sources do not suggest that ʿUmar II b. ʿAbd al-ʿAziz (r. 717–20) ever travelled to the North, they do confirm other positive accounts of his piety (if not always his actions), as found in other Christian sources.[34] Ghewond noted that '[t]hey say that he was the most noble of all the men of his tribe'. ʿUmar released the hostages that Muhammad b. Marwan had taken and thereby 'pacified the lands that were under his control'.[35] A large portion of Ghewond's text is devoted to the purported correspondence between ʿUmar and the Byzantine emperor Leo III the Isaurian (r. 717–41). This was originally penned in Greek, though, and so cannot inform us about local understanding of ʿUmar except inasmuch as it was deemed important enough to preserve in early Abbasid Armenia. A single reference in

the correspondence suggests Armenian tampering, namely a criticism of a certain Muhammad, identified as ʿUmar's uncle (so, Muhammad b. Marwan). This correspondence, according to Ghewond, so influenced ʿUmar that he felt ashamed and treated Christians well throughout his reign. A later Armenian source claims that ʿUmar recognized that Leo was correct and so removed fallacies from the Qurʾan.[36]

Two traditions related about ʿUmar place him in direct contact with Armenians. First, one of the hostages taken prisoner under Muhammad b. Marwan, Vahan Gogh'nets'i, met ʿUmar when he ordered the captives returned. Vahan, as we saw above, had been trained as a scribe and ʿUmar was loth to lose him because he 'knew no one with wisdom equal to his'. He tried to keep Vahan in Damascus by trickery; he demanded Vahan present witnesses to speak for him before the caliph but refused to allow Armenians to present at court. Vahan got around this by writing to 15 Arabs from Mesopotamia to stand as witnesses for him. Faced with this, ʿUmar next tried to cajole him into remaining in Damascus, promising him riches and honors. According to his *Life*, Vahan was fortified by the Holy Spirit and so remained steadfast in his desire to return to Armenia. He convinced ʿUmar to fix him as the governor over his home district of Gogh'n. There he converted to Christianity and, after the death of ʿUmar, set out for the caliphal court. Arriving at Rusafa, he presented before Hisham b. ʿAbd al-Malik in decrepit clothing to demonstrate his focus on the eternal spirit instead of the physical luxuries of this world. Hisham wrote to his cousin, Marwan b. Muhammad, who was then governor of the North, to ask about Vahan. Marwan responded immediately with positive evaluation of Vahan except for his conversion. Hisham followed ʿUmar's example and promised riches and power, but Vahan refused and was martyred in 737.[37]

The second story about ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAziz echoes some of these main themes, particularly the juxtaposition of spiritual wealth versus worldly poverty. ʿUmar reportedly heard of the piety of the Armenian catholicos Yovhannes and sent for him to come to court. When the catholicos arrived in sumptuous clothes, ʿUmar challenged his devotion to his faith, expecting austerity and yet finding luxury. Yovhannes responded by revealing the coarse underclothing that he wore beneath the gowns of office, demonstrating that his inner nature veered towards asceticism. ʿUmar subsequently deemed that only with God's help could a man endure such a garment and he showered gifts and honors on the catholicos before sending him back to Armenia.[38] We find here some echoes not only of Vahan's *Life*, but also of Muhammad b. Marwan's encounter with Sahak – notably the assumption that the Umayyads dealt with the upper echelons of the Church and that they favorably recognized the piety of Armenian Christians.

Maslama b. ʿAbd al-Malik

Our final examples move from religious encounters to military engagement and serve as testimony to Umayyad concerns in the Caucasus, past the frontier. The extended campaigns of Maslama b. ʿAbd al-Malik (d. 738) were perhaps the most famous connection between the Caucasus and the Umayyads. Most of his involvement dates to the Caliphate of Hisham b. ʿAbd al-Malik (r. 724–43), but he had also served as

governor of the North and ventured into the Caucasus earlier, during the reigns of his brothers al-Walid (r. 705–15) and Sulayman (r. 715–17).

Maslama campaigned in Darband and Ch'oghay and thence across the frontier to the Khazar city Tarki. Ghewond claims that he did not engage with the Khazar troops at large, but rather skirmished and entertained one-on-one challenges. Maslama, sensing that he would not succeed against the Khazars, then fled south.[39] Daskhurants'i, on the other hand, offers a less-than-complimentary account of Maslama's campaign to underscore the valor of the Albanian nobles who accompanied him:

> After three years [c. 714–15] Msliman came and sacked [Khazar-controlled] Darband and penetrated among the Khazars. He was unable to return victorious, however, and there abandoned his army and all its equipment, even employing his concubines as his rearguard. The Eranshahik[40] Vach'akan from among the patricians of Albania, a brave and vigorous prince and skilful archer, was stationed with his army at his rear. The Khazars pursued him, but they were defeated and put to flight. Thus, Msliman entered Georgia.[41]

Another source identifies Alania as the goal of this campaign, likely in 716–17,[42] as Maslama interviewed people at court to get information about the riches of the region. A man familiar with the Caucasus replied that '[t]he country is filled with every blessing. It has much gold, glorious garments, noble horses, metal weapons tempered in the blood of reptiles, cuirasses of mail, and precious stones.' This tempted Maslama into amassing 70,000 troops against Alania, but his troops were completely decimated and fled to safety. Only 200 survived. 'In this fashion the army of the Alans slaughtered the army of the Tachiks,[43] and then the Tachiks returned in great shame.'[44]

While Arabic sources record a number of campaigns against the Khazars and the Alans under Hisham b. ʿAbd al-Malik (r. 724–43), some of these notices preserve little information and can therefore be difficult to untangle. Maslama took responsibility for the front in 725, inheriting 'the worst of the various warfronts the Muslims faced at the outset of Hisham's reign'.[45] While he took the Darial Pass in 727, and again the next year, he also faced a humiliating defeat at the hands of the Khazars in 728. A number of sources narrate Maslama's confrontation with his governor, Saʿid al-Harashi, in 731. Al-Harashi had just emerged successful from a conflict with the Khazars as far south as the Armenian city Akhlat, on the shores of Lake Van. According to Ghewond, Maslama

> reproached him [al-Harashi] with numerous insults and beat him. He wanted to kill him, but he was not able to give the order publicly, for his [al-Harashi's] clan would raise an uproar. He did not dare give in to his own wishes, but silently checked his plan and returned to the Ishmaelite prince.[46]

The nature of the conflict between Maslama and the Harashi governor is not particularly clear without recourse to Arabic texts. Al-Yaʿqubi clarifies that Hisham had named Maslama as governor over the North and that Maslama had enlisted al-Harashi to serve under him. When Harashi defeated the Khazars, he sent the head

of the khagan's son to the caliph without first discussing it with Maslama.[47] Most other sources explain that Maslama had warned al-Harashi not to engage with the Khazars before he arrived. Al-Harashi claimed that he fought the Khazars before receiving these orders, but Maslama suspected that he had flagrantly disobeyed orders for glory.[48] Accordingly, Maslama's argument with al-Harashi was a power play, either because the latter went over his head to contact the caliph or because the latter willfully ignored Maslama's orders. In all Arabic accounts of this encounter, Maslama threw Harashi into prison in Bardhaʿa until the caliph himself wrote to force Maslama to release him. This is one of several examples when the interests of the Umayyads do not appear to be uniform or necessarily align with the concerns of their governors in the province.

Maslama returned to the city of Darband in 731–2,[49] pushing north to Samandar. This campaign reads as a veritable Umayyad family reunion. Maslama, the brother of the reigning caliph Hisham, commanded the expedition. Sulayman b. Hisham, Maslama's nephew and the son of the caliph, directed the left wing; Marwan b. Muhammad, the cousin of both Maslama and the caliph, led the right flank; and al-ʿAbbas b. al-Walid, the nephew of both Maslama and the caliph, controlled the centre. At one point, reports reached Maslama that his cousin Marwan had fallen in battle and he responded presciently: 'No, by God! Not until he has attained the Caliphate!'[50] Winning the day, Maslama 'shed their blood like water on the face of the earth, and filled the birds of the sky and the beasts of the steppe with their flesh'.[51] The next year, in 732–3, Maslama moved against Khazar-controlled Darband, which he was able to vacate by contaminating the water supply with dead animals. Faced with worm-ridden water, the Khazars abandoned the city. Maslama rebuilt and fortified Darband and repopulated it with Syrians on state stipends.[52]

In the same year, Maslama's expeditions brought him against regions of northern Albania and into Khazar-controlled territory. The inhabitants of Khayzan, a city in Sharwan, refused safe conduct and battled against him. When they later tried to negotiate, Maslama promised not to kill a single man or dog. The inhabitants subsequently opened Khayzan to him and he killed them all with the exception of a single man and a single dog,[53] thus keeping his promise in principle if not in spirit. Maslama then concluded peace treaties with Sharwan, Masqat, Lakz, Tabarsaran, and Warthan. As he next faced the Khazars, he had at his disposal the kings of these lands, over whom he placed his cousin, the future caliph Marwan b. Muhammad (r. 744–50). Hisham appointed Marwan as governor over the North in place of Maslama and Marwan continued the campaigns against the Sarir (Avars), Zirikaran, and Hamzin before returning to Darband. Throughout the 730s and 740s, both Maslama and Marwan conducted numerous campaigns against the Khazars in the Caucasus.

Maslama's campaigns soon became the stuff of legends. His sword reportedly remained in the *mihrab* of a mosque near Darband. Pilgrims would visit the mosque only in white clothing, the color of Umayyad banners; anyone who approached wearing another color would face the deadly wind and rain. This suggests the continued memory of the Umayyads in the region, as there are also accounts of Umayyad generals who clothed their men in white when they fought the Khazars.[54] Armenian texts similarly recognized his importance, albeit in far less complimentary terms and usually in relation to his feats against Byzantium. Ghewond, our main Armenian source for the Umayyad period, shifts the date of the campaign against

Constantinople so that Maslama died defeated. He concludes with Maslama's admission of the superiority of Byzantium and the folly of his ways. 'For truly I am not worthy of life,'[55] he declared, admitting defeat at Constantinople: 'I could not fight against God.'[56] An anonymous storyteller even adds that Maslama worshipped the cross at Hagia Sophia,[57] a neat contrast to the (equally legendary) story that Maslama entered Hagia Sophia on horseback, seized the cross, and rode through Constantinople with it hanging inverted from his spear. All other histories, though, date the campaign against Constantinople to 716–18; in pushing this campaign later, Ghewond inverts the narrative that Maslama's success in the Caucasus served as his redemption for the failure to take Constantinople.[58]

Marwan b. Muhammad

Hisham b. ʿAbd al-Malik next dispatched his cousin Marwan b. Muhammad, already a veteran of the Caucasian front, as governor of the North. 'When Marwan arrived in the city of Duin, the Armenian nobles met him and he spoke to them with words of peace.'[59] Marwan was immediately embroiled in the power struggles between two preeminent Armenian noble families, the Bagratunis and the Mamikoneans. Marwan sided with the Bagratuni family and exiled two prominent Mamikonean noblemen to Yemen. This placed Ashot, the Bagratuni patrician, as Prince of Armenia (r. 726 or 732–48). In 732, Ashot visited the caliph Hisham to discuss the 'tyranny' of caliphal rule and, specifically, to rectify the payment of Armenian cavalry in the service of the caliph. Marwan b. Muhammad then moved against the Khazars with the help of Armenian cavalry under the command of Ashot Bagratuni. They were successful in this raid and returned to Bardhaʿa to partition the booty. They sent a fifth back to the caliph Hisham, who used it to admonish his brother Maslama for his defeat against Constantinople. The rest of the booty went to Marwan's troops, including the Armenian cavalry. Marwan, then, appears largely in positive terms for his support of the Armenian cavalry and his successes against the Khazars, but also for the maintenance of order in the North: 'He ruled over this land and pacified all of the violent invasions. He cut off the feet and hands of those who commit iniquity: thieves, bandits, and enemies of good order. He sentenced them to death by crucifixion.'[60]

This positive view of Marwan b. Muhammad relies on Armenian histories, and specifically on traditions transmitted by a historian interested in celebrating the deeds of the Bagratuni house, Marwan's allies, who had accompanied Marwan during his campaign in 737. If we turn instead to the Georgian texts about this campaign, the image of Marwan is markedly different. Instead of recounting the dramatic and lucrative defeats of the Khazars, Georgian sources instead have this army decimate their own lands. Marwan appears as Murvan Qru, 'the deaf', so named either because he refused to heed his advisers or because he was deaf to the cries of his victims.[61] The *History of King Vaxt'ang Gorgasali* places Marwan at the Darial pass (Bab al-Lan), Darband, and beyond as he 'ravaged the inhabited areas of the Caucasus mountain'. He also pursued the elite of K'art'li (Jurzan in Arabic or Iberia in Greek, the south-central province of Georgia) as they fled westward to Colchis and Abkhazia, destroying the cities and fortresses as he passed.[62] Sumbat Davit'isdze has the forces of 'Qru of Baghdad' face off with the K'art'velian *curopalates* Ashot, who took refuge in a church to no avail: 'they cut him like a lamb on the steps of

the altar and his blood which was shed is visible even to this day'.[63] The story of Marwan's misdeeds in Georgia culminate with the martyrdom of two brothers, Davit and K'onst'ant'ine Mkheidze. Their *Life* describes the 'impious and ferocious king of the Persians, Murvan abul-K'asim named the Deaf, son of the sister of Muhmad, the falsely-named prophet', [64] who is also identified anachronistically as the 'great *amir mumli*'.[65] Marwan attempted beating, insulting, converting, and complimenting the brothers before he finally ordered their hands and feet bound with rocks and threw them into the Rioni River. Their *Life* claims that Marwan subsequently died, 'despised by all', when God struck him down for trying to fill the sea with rocks in order build a pathway by which he might to take Constantinople.[66] A member of the Georgian royal family discovered the relics of the saints in the eleventh century and built the monastery at Motsameta to commemorate them (Figure 11.3).

Arabic sources do not place Marwan in the field against the Georgians, though they locate his base in Kisal, 20 farsangs from Tbilisi. Rather, they preserve information about his campaigns past the caliphal frontier into the Caucasus. In 735–6, Marwan dispatched two forces, one against the Alans and the second against the Tumanshah, whom he captured and sent to Hisham. The following year, 736–7, he defeated Wartanis. The next year, 737, Marwan campaigned through Alania deep into Khazar territory, making a total of seven raids from Armenia. His campaign continued in 738–9, moving against the Sarir, Tuman, Tabarsaran, and Filan, among others.[67] In other words, historians writing in Arabic understand Marwan's

Figure 11.3 The monastery of Motsameta near modern Kutaisi, Georgia. Photo courtesy of Scott McDonough.

expeditions as part of the Arab-Khazar wars, focusing on the subjugation of local kingdoms in the Caucasus, Khazar defeats, and their purported conversion to Islam.

Marwan ruled over the North until the outbreak of the civil war following the death of the caliph al-Walid b. Yazid (r. 743–4). When the third *fitna* broke out, Marwan left another governor to administer the province in his name and marched south. In the midst of this turmoil, the Mamikonean nobles were able to escape their exile in Yemen. They returned to Armenia and made an ally of Marwan's governor, who appointed the newly returned Grigor Mamikonean as Prince of Armenia (r. 744). Ashot Bagratuni called on allies of his own and marched south into Syria, coming across Marwan on the battle lines. The arrival of 15,000 Armenian cavalry in Syria to back Marwan was reportedly a major upset to Marwan's opponents, who fled the battle rather than engage such a force.[68] Again, this cannot be understood as Armenian support for Marwan b. Muhammad's position vis-à-vis the tumultuous family claims of the Umayyads during the *fitna*. We should instead read the arrival of Armenian cavalry in Syria in light of Bagratuni-Mamikonean rivalry, where Ashot Bagratuni and Grigor Mamikonean both made allies to support their own claims to rule over Armenia; Ashot was simply more successful in identifying and cultivating a powerful ally. Victorious, Marwan b. Muhammad wrote to his governor to command him to imprison one of the Mamikonean brothers who had challenged Ashot. The governor, on Marwan's order, had Dawit' Mamikonean's hands and feet removed before crucifying him. Marwan reinstated Ashot Bagratuni as the Prince of Armenia, leaving an angry Grigor Mamikonean to take revenge later, hence Ashot's epithet as Ashot the Blind. Ghewond is henceforth far more interested in the Bagratuni-Mamikonean rivalry, which culminated in a Mamikonean rebellion aimed to dislodge not only Umayyad claims to the North, but also Bagratuni ascendance within Armenia.

The third *fitna* appears as unceasing, continuing right up to the arrival of Abbasid troops. Here, Ghewond clearly relies on a different source, as his support for Marwan falters. The inexorable advance of the Abbasid troops appears as the manifestation of divine will, a demonstration that God Himself decried the violence of the *fitna*. Marwan, Ghewond claims incorrectly, fell at the Battle of Zab in 750. 'He committed all of these evils, the disturbances of wars, the capture of cities, and the shedding of blood, in six years and then he died.'[69]

A few interesting themes emerge from this narrative of the Umayyad family's relations with the North. The Umayyads do not claim 'good' or 'bad' relations with the nobles of the North, but rather more realistically, had some allies and other enemies as they manipulated the contours of internal politics as it suited their needs. This sometimes placed the Umayyads at odds with a noble house or even with their own appointed governors, while fostering closer relationship with others. The closest relationship is consistently between the Umayyad family and the Armenian and Albanian cavalry, as many of the raids into Khazar or Alan territory relied on troops from the North. We should not understand such collaboration, strictly speaking, as a joint effort of local and caliphal forces, but rather recognize that the caliphal army included Armenian and Albanian contingents, led and maintained by the Armenian and Albanian princes. Interestingly, several caliphs also engage the Caucasian Churches, specifically vaunting the catholicoi for their piety and steadfast

commitment to their people. These catholicoi occasionally appear as representatives for their people before the caliphs.

SOURCES ON THE UMAYYADS IN THE NORTH

These reports suggest unequivocally that the North was Umayyad through and through. At the same time, many of the stories beggar belief. Did an Umayyad caliph really vaunt the piety of an Armenian catholicos or should we read this with the same caution that we apply to the statement that Maslama b. ʿAbd al-Malik worshipped the cross in Constantinople or that ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAziz altered the Qurʾan? Many of our sources go to extremes: the scions of the Umayyad family are either devil-possessed, blood-thirsty exterminators who wrought evil across the land or, alternatively, pious, wise, brave men with a remarkable moral compass who sowed peace wherever they trod. Sometimes, a single Umayyad scion appears on both extremes of this spectrum, even on the pages of a single history. This suggests that many of our extant sources preserve layers of earlier works patched together, rendering impossible any generalization about a single, authoritative 'Armenian' or 'Georgian' perception of the Umayyads. Before concluding whether the sources from the North demonstrate the involvement of the Umayyad caliphs and their family members in far-flung provinces outside of Syria, we must first pause for a moment to appreciate the goals and expectations of our polyvalent sources. In short, how much of this narrative should we believe?

The Umayyads became the mirror to reflect the divisive fault-lines within and between societies of the North. Arabic and Persian sources offer no indication that the Umayyads interfered in (or even noticed) Christological infighting between the Caucasian sees. Daskhurantsʻi's snippet about ʿAbd al-Malik's involvement in Albania and his correspondence with the Armenian catholicos flies in the face of Arabic sources, which exhibit a profound disinterest in everything related to the Church. This story is, likely, not an indication of Umayyad policies vis-à-vis the Albanian catholicos and queen, but rather reveals Armenian and Albanian concerns for Christological differentiations, consequently and perhaps somewhat spuriously placing the Umayyads in the position of arbiters in local theological disputes. ʿAbd al-Malik's surprising devotion to the miaphysite cause is a local claim attested in a comparatively late history, dating to the tenth century. It would be all too easy to reject this as an Abbasid-era invention. Yet, as is often the case with Abbasid-era sources on the Umayyads, some details here force us to examine the lost sources underlying the Abbasid-era texts. In this example, ʿAbd al-Malik's letter addresses the Armenian patriarch as *armenean azgi jatʻlkid*.[70] The title *jatʻlkid* renders the Arabic *jathliq*, which is an Arabized reading of the Greek *katholikos*, the Syriac *qattoliqa*, or even the Armenian *katʻoghikos*. ʿAbd al-Malik's word for 'Armenian' here, though, is neither Armenian nor Arabic. It should read *hayocʻ* if it were in Armenian or *arman* in Arabic; *armeniyan* is Persian, suggesting a Persian source for this passage. As such, this is unlikely to be an Armenian invention. Daskhurantsʻi's *History of the Albanians* is a famously curious text that clearly incorporates earlier strata of Albanian history, weaving seventh-century sources and documents into a tenth-century framework. While this does little to quell concerns about the late provenance for this passage, it does raise questions about the interrelated nature of Near Eastern texts and, further, prohibits the study of Armenian-language sources as independent checks on the

Arabic. This example is not unique, as most sources relevant to the Umayyads were composed during the Abbasid period and many reveal a complicated relationship with Arabic and Persian historiography.

Daskhurants'i is not the only historian writing in Armenian to incorporate passages with Arabic words. In the case of Daskhurants'i, this hints at the permeability of Armenian and Arabic texts in the tenth century. In other cases, the Arabic may well appear to lend believability to the stories. Draskhanakertts'i – also writing in the tenth century, but about Armenian history – tells a tale that is familiar to us here. Following the Battle of Vardanakert, a Muslim general named Ogbay [read ʿUqba] moved to curtail the Armenian rebellion. The catholicos Sahak, then a hostage in Damascus, requested and was granted the right to travel to Harran and beg for clemency for his people. Like Ghewond's account discussed above, he died in Harran before ever meeting the general, but left a persuasive letter. Ogbay

> immediately approached the shrouded body of the man of God and according to their tradition he extended his hand towards him, as if he were alive and greeted him in his tongue, *salamalek'*. Then the power of the Holy Spirit moved towards the *ostikan* [governor] the saint's hand, which had fallen into disuse because of lack of breath, to offer the supplications.[71]

Draskhanakertts'i – and, following him, Step'anos Taronets'i and Vardan Arewelts'i – is clearly reporting the same tradition as Ghewond, though there are significant differences. Ghewond's version does not record the Armenicized Arabic *salamalek'*, but it is noticeably earlier (eighth century, compared to Draskhanakertts'i's tenth century). Ghewond's version also avoids the awkward trip from Damascus to Harran: if Sahak could request the right to travel from ʿAbd al-Malik, surely he also had the right to ask the caliph for clemency directly without bothering to go to Harran. Yet if Ghewond's version is not only earlier but also more believable, we should then be able to explain why Draskhanakertts'i thought to replace Muhammad b. Marwan with an uncelebrated, even unidentified, general. This comparison raises a thorny question. It is entirely possible that medieval historians inserted the Umayyads into their histories in order to stress the significance of any given event or to suggest royal approval of local leaders. In other words, perhaps ʿUqba was not important enough to justify Sahak's attention, so Ghewond simply replaced him with a brother of the caliph.

The caliph-as-trope might also explain why a number of the engagements between the Armenian catholicoi and the Umayyads wander from one scion of the Umayyad line to another. The best model for this is Murvan Qru in Georgian sources, who appears to be a curious amalgam of Muhammad b. Marwan and Marwan b. Muhammad.[72] With the exception of the military campaigns, nearly all of the episodes discussed above appear in multiple forms, whether jumping from one caliph to the next or from an Umayyad to other Muslim troops or governors. ʿAbd al-Malik's correspondence about Albanian Chalcedonianism appears elsewhere attributed to ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAziz, though shorn of the Arabic and Persian words.[73] Muhammad b. Marwan's condemnation of the clergy at Zuart'nots' likewise appears elsewhere, though Draskhanakertts'i instead names only the governor Yazid, likely Yazid b. Mazyad al-Shaybani.[74] Similarly, the story about the Armenian catholicos who ventured to

the royal court and impressed ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAziz with his hidden, ascetic garb also appears elsewhere in other forms. Draskhanakertts'i and Step'anos Taronets'i identify the catholicos in question as Yovhannes (*c.* 717–28), but rather than naming the caliph, they refer only to the name of the governor of Armenia, a certain Walid who is unattested elsewhere.[75] Another later text, Kirakos Gandzakets'i, explains that Yovhannes actually met with Hisham b. ʿAbd al-Malik, not ʿUmar.[76]

The very flexibility of these stories allows the Umayyads to wander in and out of the histories of the North, suggesting that the historians were not necessarily interested in establishing a strict timeline or in the Umayyads as individuals, but rather used the Umayyads to serve their own rhetorical needs. The scions of the Umayyad family were sometimes interchangeable and/or inserted to impress the significance of any given event that we might more conservatively attribute to their governors or agents on the ground. Interestingly, all of the examples of fluid identification of caliphs relate specifically to Umayyad engagement with the Armenian and Albanian Churches, not with the military campaigns in the Caucasus. There are a number of possible rationales for this, not least of which would be the more entertaining value of stories vaunting the Armenian catholicoi, but also because the narratives of military campaigns relied on a wholly different set of sources, where the Arabic and even Georgian offer more concrete detail than the Armenian. While these should not be understood as hermetically sealed, isolated historiographies, at the same time it suggests that Armenian historians inserted the Umayyads into their narratives for reasons that did not necessarily reflect the norms of Umayyad governance.

CONCLUSIONS

The North was most certainly Umayyad. The Umayyad Caliphate was centralized enough to impose uniform weights and measures and to mint aniconic coins in the North. The Umayyads set governors in Duin and Bardhaʿa who conducted censuses and collected taxes. They settled Arabs in the North, building cities and defending them when needed. The Umayyad armies grew with Armenian and Albanian cavalry, written into the *diwan* and paid by state stipends. This chapter has not attempted a full accounting of Umayyad governance, the details of which are readily available elsewhere.[77] Instead, we have focused here on the role of the Umayyad family itself in the governance of the North and campaigns in the Caucasus. These reports serve as a clear reminder of the region's demonstrable ties to the Umayyads, a sustained discussion with the caliphs and their brothers, cousins, and nephews. This narrative shies from the idea of an empire of isolated provinces ruled by proxy.

We should reasonably assign some of the reports above, particularly those related to the catholicoi, to the realm of legends. These promoted particular viewpoints internal to Armenian society and so therefore do not contribute to the discussion of Umayyad policies in the North. Yet even these sources – taken at a reasonable distance – still demonstrate how the North became Umayyad. After all, Armenian traditions about venerable catholicoi who impress Muhammad b. Marwan or ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAziz might not be historically authoritative, but to make sense of them we must accept that historians understood the North to be integrated into the Umayyad Caliphate. The purported support of the Umayyads for the Caucasian Churches and

Armenian catholicoi served both to vaunt the Church and to arbitrate disagreements. Even in stories aimed at Armenian or Albanian audiences, the Umayyads themselves were significant actors in the affairs of the North.

NOTES

1 I'd like to thank Antoine Borrut and Tim Greenwood for their insightful comments on the draft of this chapter.
2 I avoid the term 'Caucasus', which is anachronistic; Vacca 2017b: xv. Armenia and Albania appear as 'the North' in Arabic, Armenian, Greek, Syriac, and Georgian texts. The term 'Umayyad North' was coined in Bates (1989) based on numismatic evidence.
3 During the period of caliphal rule, Caucasian Albania (Arran in Arabic or Aghuank' in Armenian) included both the modern Republic of Azerbaijan and the regions of Georgia under caliphal rule.
4 Blankinship 1994: 107.
5 While this chapter deals with the question of centralization of the Caliphate, the provinces themselves were not centralized despite their presiding princes; see Garsoïan 2012: 22.
6 T'ovma Artsruni 1985a: 172; 1985b: 168.
7 Pseudo-Sebeos 1999: I, 111–12; 1979: 147.
8 Al-Baladhuri 1866: 197.
9 Pseudo-Sebeos 1999: I, 143; 1979: 169 refers to Muʿawiya as the prince of the Ismaelites in a passage relating to 652, while the caliph appears instead as 'king'.
10 Pseudo-Sebeos 1999: I, 136; 1979: 164. On the reading, 'as much as you are able' (to render the Arabic *ʿala al-taqah*), see Jinbashian 1978.
11 Pseudo-Sebeos 1979: 164.
12 Pseudo-Sebeos 1999: II, 143; 1979: 164. Spellings of Armenian names are also changed to follow the transcription elsewhere in this chapter.
13 Compare Daskhurants'i 1961: 117–18; 1983: 183; Garsoïan 2012: 17.
14 Pseudo-Sebeos 1999: I, 153; 1979: 175; Taronets'i 2017: 164; 1885: 99. While Pseudo-Sebeos is inconclusive on the identity of the 'king of Ismael', Step'anos follows this passage with the comment that 'straightaway he himself died at the hands of his own forces', referring to the assassination of ʿUthman in 656. Note, though, that Theophanes (1883: 344) has an Armenian patrician negotiate hostages with Muʿawiya, not with ʿUthman, in 651–2.
15 Draskhanakertts'i 1987: 104; 1996: 92, collapsing the Battle of Siffin (657) with the murder of ʿAli b. Abi Talib (661). Pseudo-Sebeos (1999: I, 154; 1979: 176) also has Muʿawiya kill ʿAli, though he condemns Muʿawiya for the 'slaughter of immense multitudes' during the first *fitna*.
16 Daskhurants'i 1961: 153; 1983: 237.
17 Ghewond, Matenadaran 1902, 10v, compare: 12v: Grigor Mamikonean appears as *ishkhann ha[y]oc'*. Draskhanakertts'i 1987: 104; 1996: 92, Grigor as curopalates and *hramanatar*. See Step'anos Taronets'i 2017: 186; 1885: 122 for Grigor's dubious claim over Georgia. All references from Ghewond in this chapter are transcribed from the oldest extant manuscript, Matenadaran 1902, edited and translated by Sergio La Porta and myself (in preparation).
18 Zuart'nots' was founded while Muʿawiya was still governor of Syria; Pseudo-Sebeos 1999: 112; 1979: 147; Maranci 2015; Garsoïan 2012: 36–40.
19 Daskhurants'i 1961: 125; 1983: 193.
20 Daskhurants'i 1961: 127–30; 1983: 196–201.
21 This is an Armenian reading of the Arabic title of the caliph, *amir al-muʾminin*, 'Commander of the Faithful'.
22 Daskhurants'i 1961: 198; 1983: 305. I have followed Dowsett's translation here except that he renders the Armenian word *diwan* as 'registries'. I have reverted it to the original to

demonstrate the similarity with the Arabic. Spellings of Armenian names are also changed to follow the transcription elsewhere in this chapter.

23 Ghewond, Matenadaran 1902, 15v–16r; Theophanes 1883: 368.

24 Thomson 1989: 191; *Patmut'iwn* 1971: 73. This source collects a number of oral tales circulating in southern Armenia in the medieval period; it is not in any sense a reliable history. It names the caliph 'Amr, ruler of Baghdad' and specifies that Amr was reigning after Abu Bakr, when Heraclius died and Leo reigned. As such, it seems that he means ʿUmar b. al-Khattab as caliph. However, the same source identifies the caliph Amr as the brother of Malim (Maslama), so clearly his storyline interweaves a number of different people and periods.

25 Daskhurants'i (1961: 207; 1983: 317) claims that Muhammad b. Marwan arrived in Darband in 146 of the Armenian era, or 5 June 697–6 June 698. Khalifa b. Khayyat (2015: 154–5; 1995: 182) claims that ʿAbd al-Malik appointed Muhammad over Armenia in 701–2 and then again in 702–3. The timing here is not certain, given that historians do not agree on the number of campaigns. See Theophanes (1883: 366) who says this took place in 693.

26 Thomson 1989: 192; *Patmut'iwn* 1971: 75.

27 Ghewond, Matenadaran 1902, 17r. On this, see Daskhurants'i 1961: 207; 1983: 318: 'the family of St. Gregory came to an end'. Taronets'i 2017: 187; 1885: 123; Arewelts'i 1926: 95 and 50.

28 Ghewond, Matenadaran 1902, 20v. For the identity of the Lady Shushan, see Greenwood 2004: 75–6.

29 Ghewond, Matenadaran 1902, 23v.

30 On this event, see Vacca 2016; note that this does not account for Ibn Aʿtham, whose account is different from the other Arabic and Armenian renditions.

31 This is based on the *vita* of Vahan Goght'nets'i; Gatteyrias 1880: 187.

32 Daskhurants'i 1961: 208; 1983: 318–19.

33 Armenian texts refer to Yazid b. ʿAbd al-Malik, e.g. Ghewond's reference to him as 'a wicked man and moved by fury. He fought the Christian peoples with great cruelty, for he was led by demonic violence' (Matenadaran 1902, 72v). They do not describe any interactions between him and the peoples of the Umayyad North, though, which is the focus of this chapter.

34 Borrut 2011: 301–5.

35 Ghewond, Matenadaran 1902, 32r.

36 T'ovma Artsruni 1985a: 171; 1985b: 166–8.

37 Gatteyrias 1880.

38 Draskhanakertts'i 1987: 111; 1996: 104.

39 Ghewond, Matenadaran 1902, 30v–31r; Step'anos Taronets'i 2017: 190; 1885: 127.

40 Eŕanšahik is a contested term, but renders either a family name or the title Arranshah, that is, the king (shah) of Albania (Arran).

41 Daskhurants'i 1961: 209; 1983: 320. Spellings of Armenian names are changed to follow the transcription elsewhere in this chapter.

42 Theophanes 1883: 391, though it places Alan-Abkhazian conflict in the context of Leo's diplomacy and Maslama's campaigns against Abkhazia and Iberia.

43 The word *tačik* appears in Armenian, Sogdian, Sanskrit, Georgian, and Syriac. It likely means 'Arab', but in Armenian texts of the tenth century also means 'Muslim' of any ethnicity; see Vacca 2017a: 90–2.

44 Thomson 1989: 192; *Patmut'iwn* 1971: 75.

45 Blankinship 1994: 121.

46 Ghewond, Matenadaran 1902, 75r.

47 Al-Yaʿqubi 1883: II, 381.

48 Khalifa b. Khayyat 2015: 229; 1995: 222; Ibn Aʿtham 1975: VIII, 253; al-Baladhuri 1866: 206–7; Dunlop 1967: 74–75.
49 Daskhurantsʻi 1961: 210; 1983: 320. *Chronicle of Zuqnin* (1999: 159–60) has Maslama in the North to destroy 'the gate of the Turks' in 730–1 and to rebuild it in 731–2. Since the author identifies this gate as the work of Anushirwan, he is likely referring to Darband.
50 Dunlop 1967: 78.
51 *Chronicle of Zuqnin* 1999: 160.
52 Al-Baladhuri 1866: 207.
53 Khalifa b. Khayyat 2015: 229; 1995: 222; Ibn Aʿtham 1975: VIII, 254.
54 Qazwini 1960: 508–9; on wearing Umayyad white, see Dunlop 1967: 82.
55 Ghewond, Matenadaran 1902, 82r.
56 Ghewond, Matenadaran 1902, 82v.
57 Thomson 1989: 195; *Patmutʻiwn* 1971: 85.
58 Borrut 2011: 229–82 on Maslama's campaigns; on the inversion of the cross specifically, see 244.
59 Ghewond, Matenadaran 1902, 82v.
60 Ghewond, Matenadaran 1902, 84v.
61 Rapp 2003: 384; Toumanoff 1963: 351.
62 *History of Vaxtʻang Gorgasali* 1999: 241; Sumbat Davitʻisdze confirms, see Rapp 2003: 355.
63 Rapp 2003: 356.
64 Martin-Hisard 1982: 127.
65 Martin-Hisard 1982: 134. This is a Georgian reading of the Arabic title of the caliph, *amir al-muʾminin*, 'Commander of the Faithful'.
66 Martin-Hisard 1982: 136.
67 Khalifa b. Khayyat 2015: 233–40; 1995: 225–8; Azdi 1967: 40; on the Sarir, Tuman, etc., see 42–3; al-Baladhuri 1866: 208–9. Note, though, that Marwan launched multiple campaigns to these regions through 740, so these could refer to a number of different years.
68 Ghewond, Matenadaren 1902, 88v.
69 Ghewond, Matenadaran 1902, 94v.
70 Daskhurantsʻi 1961: 192; 1983: 296.
71 Draskhanakertsʻi 1987: 108; 1996: 100; compare Stepʻanos Taronetsʻi 2017: 169; 1885: 102. Spellings of Armenian words are changed to follow the transcription elsewhere in this chapter.
72 Toumanoff 1963: 351.
73 Draskhanakertsʻi 1987: 109–10; 1996: 102.
74 Draskhanakertsʻi 1987: 114; 1996: 110.
75 Stepʻanos Taronetsʻi 2017: 170–1; 1885: 103–4; Draskhanakertsʻi 1987: 111; 1996: 104.
76 Kirakos Gandzaketsʻi 1961: 67.
77 On Umayyad Armenia, see Laurent and Canard 1980; Garsoïan 2012; on the wars in the Caucasus, see Dunlop 1967; Blankinship 1994.

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CHAPTER TWELVE

ELITES IN THE COUNTRYSIDE
The economic and political factors behind the Umayyad 'desert castles'

Denis Genequand

INTRODUCTION

The so-called Umayyad 'desert castles' of Greater Syria (*Bilad al-Sham*) have long been seen as well-preserved monuments providing good material evidence for art historians and historians of architecture. They gave important insights into Umayyad court life, but were considered somewhat as a side phenomenon without much importance for the social and economic history of early Islamic Syria. However, renewed archaeological investigations at a number of these sites, and a broader approach taking into consideration not only the residences or palaces, but also all the surrounding structures, now means that a different picture of their layout, roles and functions can be presented, notably in political and economic terms. Indeed, the terminology for these settlements that is found in most of the scholarly literature, variously 'desert castles', 'Umayyad castles', 'Umayyad palaces', and so on, is misleading. To avoid misconceptions, it is certainly preferable to speak about 'Umayyad aristocratic settlements' as a more neutral definition better reflecting a broad category of sites with very different layouts and organisation.

To date, 38 such Umayyad aristocratic settlements are known archaeologically (Figure 12.1). They are mostly in modern Syria and Jordan, with a few exceptions in Palestine. The majority of them are situated in steppe lands – not in the desert – and the rest are found in better-watered regions.

With only a few exceptions, especially the structures that were never completed, the residences or palaces never stand alone, but are part of much larger compounds of which they only form the core or centre. Besides a residence or a palace that is more or less lavishly decorated, the other components of the compounds are mosques, baths, service buildings, houses, irrigation devices and agricultural structures (such as dams, aqueducts, qanats, irrigation channels, enclosures, and fields), and industrial structures related to the transformation of agricultural productions (such as oil presses, wineries, and water mills).

Throughout the twentieth century there have been long debates about the dates and the functions of the Umayyad aristocratic settlements. If the question of the date – late antique or early Islamic – was definitely settled before the mid-twentieth

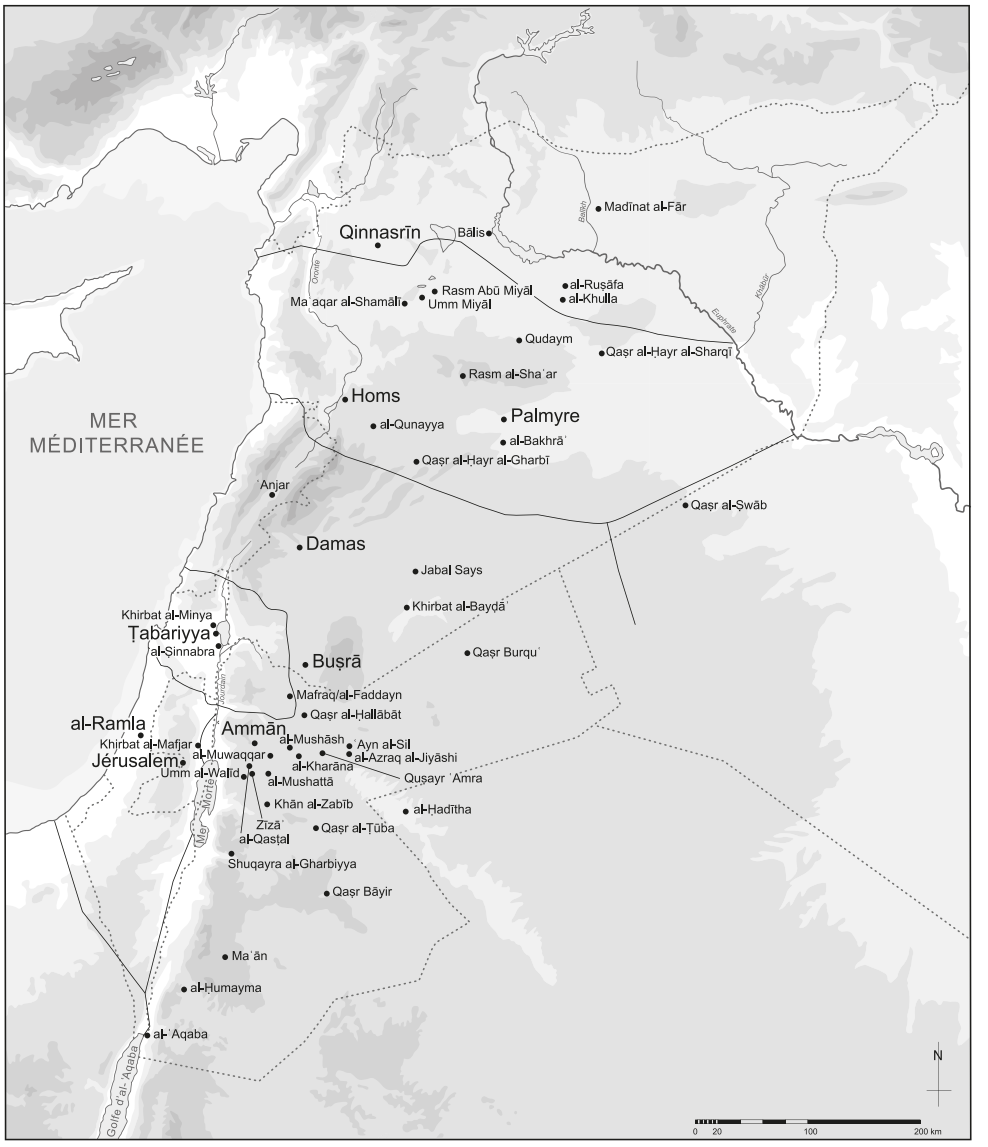

Figure 12.1 Distribution of the Umayyad aristocratic settlements in Greater Syria. Drawing Marion Berti.

century, their functions are still a matter of debate and these have been variously interpreted, amongst others, as hunting lodges, retreats for a hedonistic way of life, road stations, meeting places for the caliphs, or agricultural estates.[1] If none of these interpretations is completely wrong, they were however probably not given their real respective importance and should never be considered alone. Besides these functions, there is always a residential function, as living places for the new Muslim elites, whatever their position in the hierarchy, which is the primary function, common to

all the 38 Umayyad aristocratic settlements; it will not be dealt with in any detail here. Instead this chapter investigates two of the more important functions, the economic and the political. Four examples showing clear differences in terms of size, components, organisation, and status are examined in detail.[2] The first two examples, both in modern Jordan, are Humayma and Umm al-Walid. These were associated with members of the new Arabian elite. The latter examples, Qasr al-Hayr al-Gharbi and Qasr al-Hayr al-Sharqi, in modern Syria, were the products of Umayyad caliphal patronage.

UMAYYAD 'DESERT CASTLES': A SHORT SURVEY OF FOUR SITES

Humayma, in southern Jordan, was a property of the Abbasid family during the second half the seventh and first half of the eighth century. The Umayyad period settlement includes a residence and a small mosque. It was built beside a Nabataean, Roman and Byzantine village and military site, that was still partly settled.[3] The residence is very simple and looks like a central courtyard house, along the wings of which new rooms were added progressively (Figure 12.2). In the sources, the residence is described as a *qasr*, exactly as some much larger and lavishly decorated caliphal palaces.

Umm al-Walid, in central Jordan, was also founded beside a Roman village. The Umayyad settlement includes three residences, a mosque and some houses

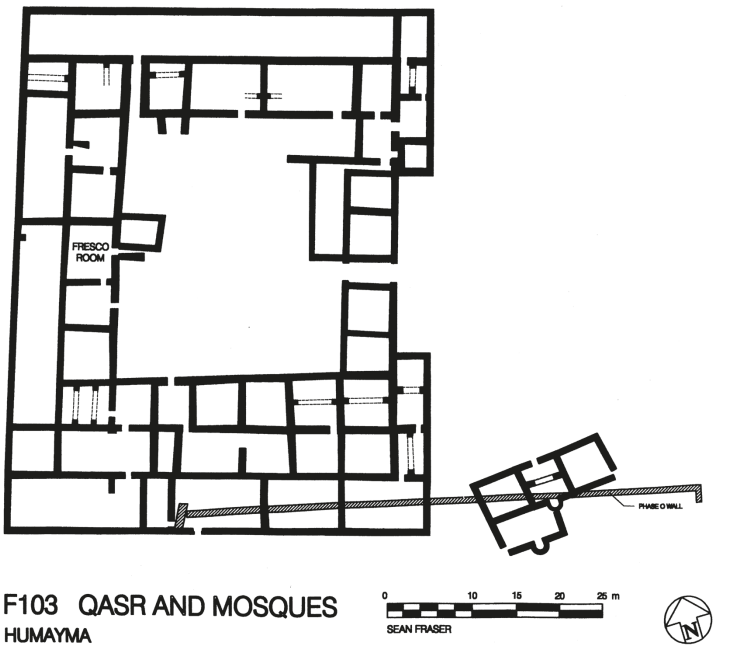

Figure 12.2 Humayma, plan of the Abbasid family residence and mosque. After Oleson et al. (2003). Courtesy of Rebecca Foote.

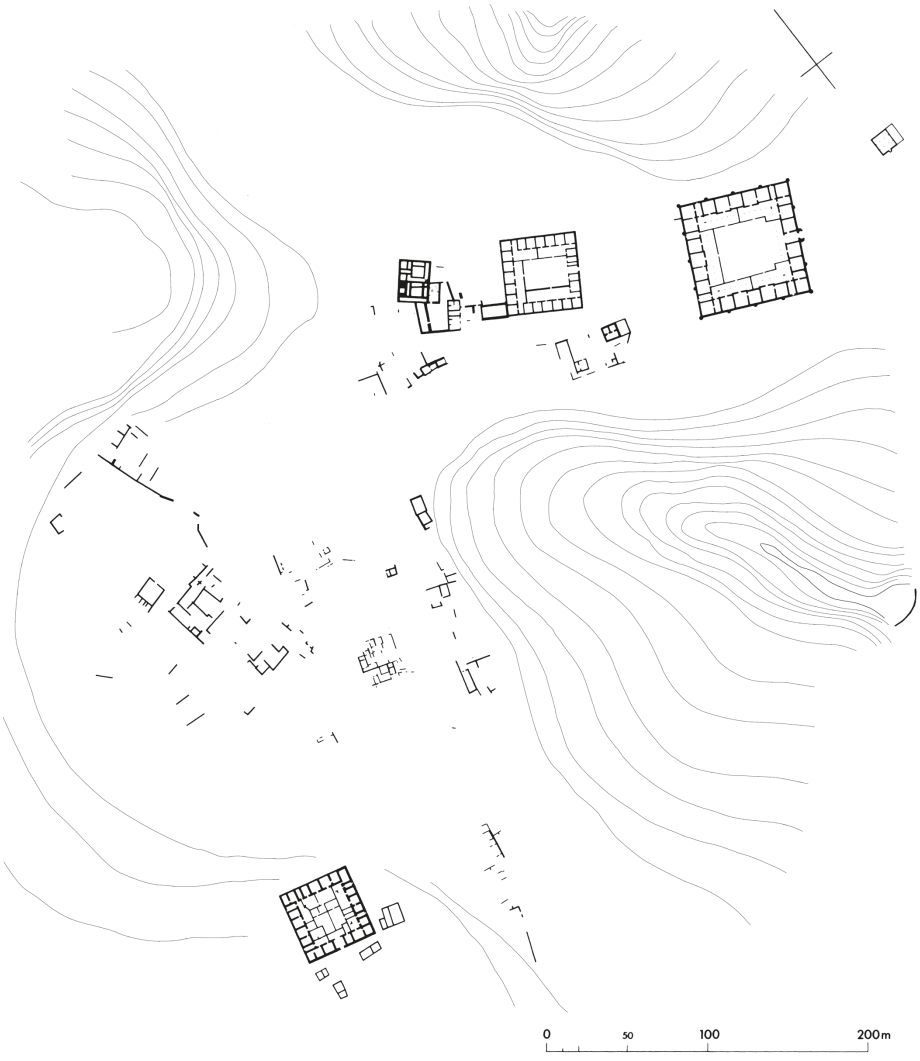

Figure 12.3 Umm al-Walid, plan of the site.
Drawing Wilfried Trillen; permission of Jacques Bujard.

(Figure 12.3).[4] Two residences have very simple plans, with a curtain wall devoid of buttresses or towers and four wings of rooms around a central courtyard. Rooms are, however, organised in different apartments by smaller walls dividing the courtyard. The third residence, in the eastern part of the settlement, is much larger and its curtain wall is reinforced by rounded buttresses along the sides, at the corners and around the gateway (Figure 12.4). The inside of the structure has a similar division into apartments and is only very sparsely decorated. Some two kilometres away to the north-east, in the Wadi al-Qanatir, there is an extended agricultural area comprising two large retaining dams in a valley with an ephemeral stream (Figure 12.5),

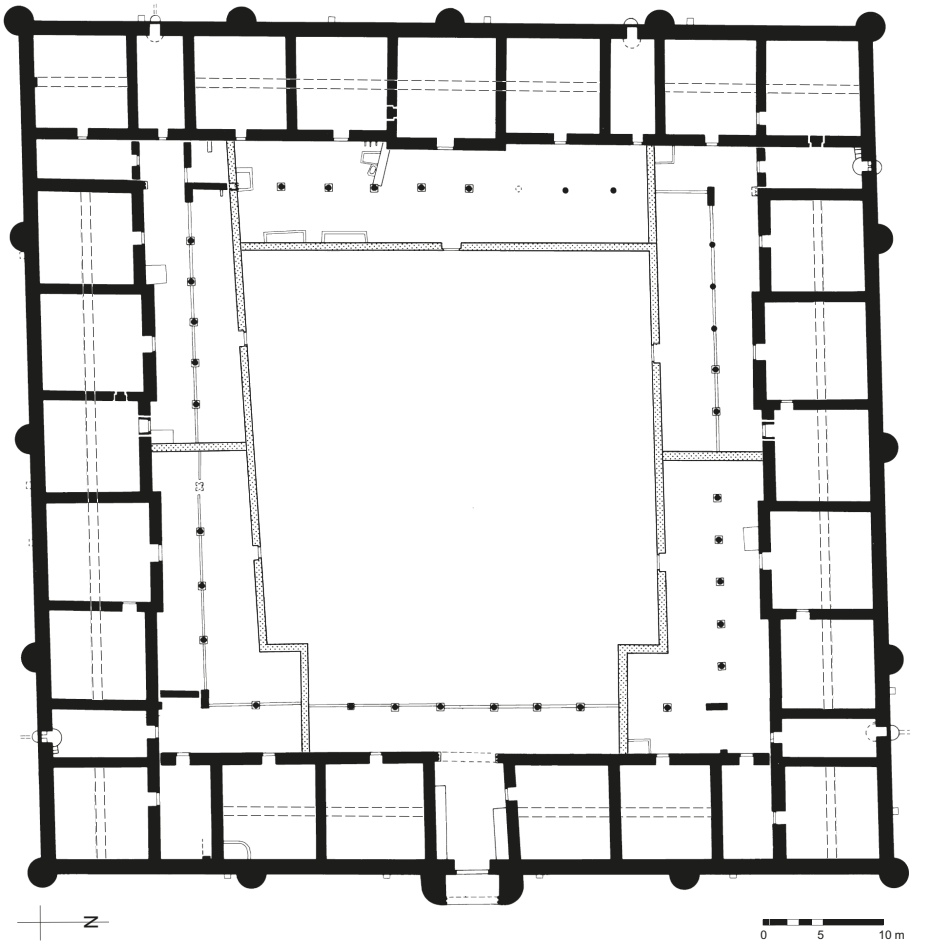

Figure 12.4 Umm al-Walid, plan of the eastern residence. Drawing Wilfried Trillen; permission of Jacques Bujard.

a winery that was enlarged in a second phase (Figure 12.6), and irrigated lands. If Umm al-Walid gives some idea of a wealthy patron, it cannot compare with the following caliphal examples and it might have belonged to any minor figure of the new Muslim elite. The site was abandoned after its partial destruction by the 749 earthquake.

Qasr al-Hayr al-Gharbi, in western Palmyrena, was the first Umayyad aristocratic settlement to be thoroughly excavated in the 1930s.[5] The settlement is isolated in an arid environment and includes a lavishly decorated caliphal palace, the plan of which can be considered as emblematic of Umayyad palatial architecture (Figure 12.7). It has two storeys, a central courtyard with porticoes, and a curtain wall reinforced by large buttresses around the gateway, along the sides and at the corners. Rooms are organised on two rows and are subdivided into the traditional apartments, each

Figure 12.5 Umm al-Walid, view of the lower dam in Wadi al-Qanatir; the winery is situated at the end of the dam. Photo Jacques Bujard.

Figure 12.6 Umm al-Walid, view of the winery in Wadi al-Qanatir. Photo Jacques Bujard.

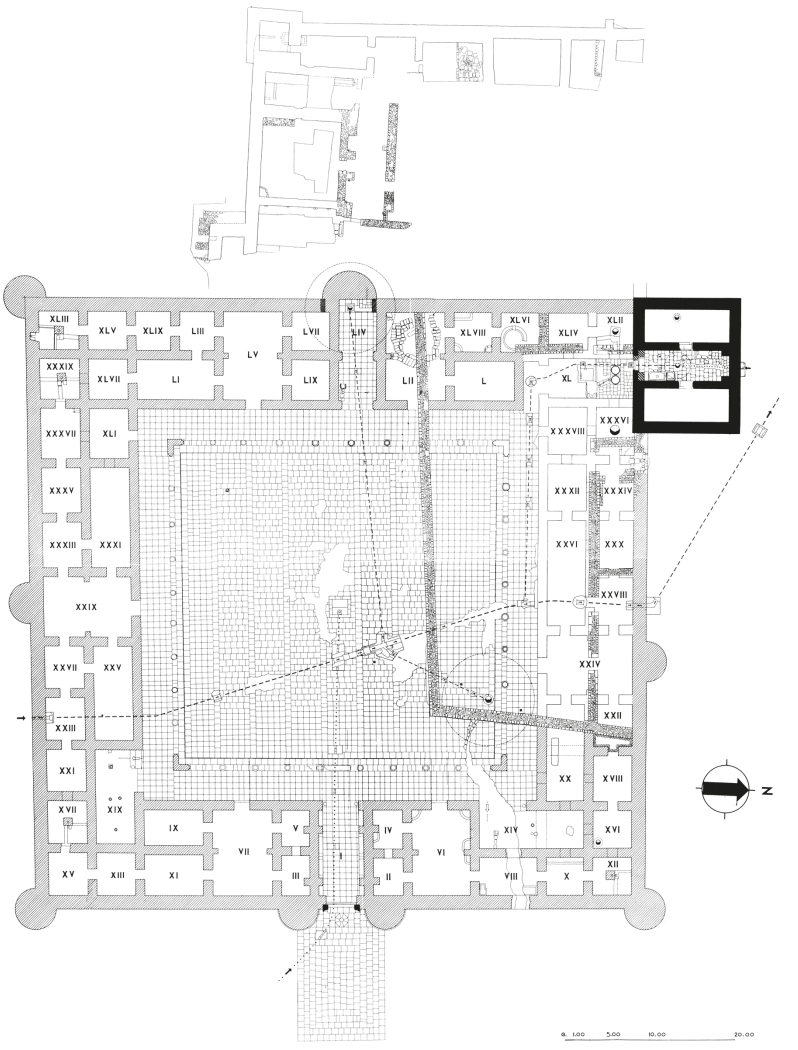

Figure 12.7 Qasr al-Hayr al-Gharbi, plan of the caliphal palace. After Schlumberger (1986); permission of Presses de l'Ifpo.

organised around a larger room giving access laterally to four to six smaller rooms (this arrangement is called the Syrian *bayt*). Large parts of the inner and outer façades were decorated with carved stucco (Figure 12.8), while most of the rooms had frescoes. The site also includes a bath and a structure interpreted as stables or as a *khan*, the lintel of which bears an inscription attributing the construction to caliph Hisham b. ʿAbd al-Malik in 727. But the most striking part of the site is an

Figure 12.8 Qasr al-Hayr al-Gharbi, reconstitution of the façade of the caliphal palace in the National Museum in Damascus. Photo Denis Genequand.

extended water system intended to irrigate an agricultural enclosure (Figure 12.9). It begins 18 kilometres away with a huge retaining dam – the Harbaqa dam, the largest masonry dam ever built before the modern era – continues with aqueducts, a reservoir, and ends up in a fully irrigated enclosure covering 46 hectares (Figure 12.10). There is a second dam, smaller and curved, situated just above the enclosure and a water mill was also built on one of the aqueducts. There do not seem to be houses or other kinds of domestic structures on the site, indicating, therefore, a rather limited population living permanently in Qasr al-Hayr al-Gharbi. Because it was excavated more than 80 years ago, not much is known about the stratigraphy of the site, but it seems to have been abandoned during the second half of the eighth century.

Qasr al-Hayr al-Sharqi lies in the steppe lands some 110 kilometres to the east-north-east of Palmyra. The site was investigated during the 1960s by an American project led by Grabar and more recently by a Syrian-Swiss archaeological mission.[6] It is an enormous archaeological site, covering almost 10 square kilometres (Figure 12.11). A lost inscription also attributes its construction to the caliph Hisham b. ʿAbd al-Malik in 728–9. The core of the settlement comprises a caliphal palace with a rather classical plan and a bath preceded by a basilical room, which may have served as a reception hall (Figure 12.12). There is also a structure known as the 'large enclosure' that is delineated by a rampart with rounded towers and four gates. This enclosure includes, around a large square courtyard, a congregational mosque, at least eight dwelling units, and an industrial unit with two oil presses (one of them probably being a winery in the first phase). To the north and east of these structures, there

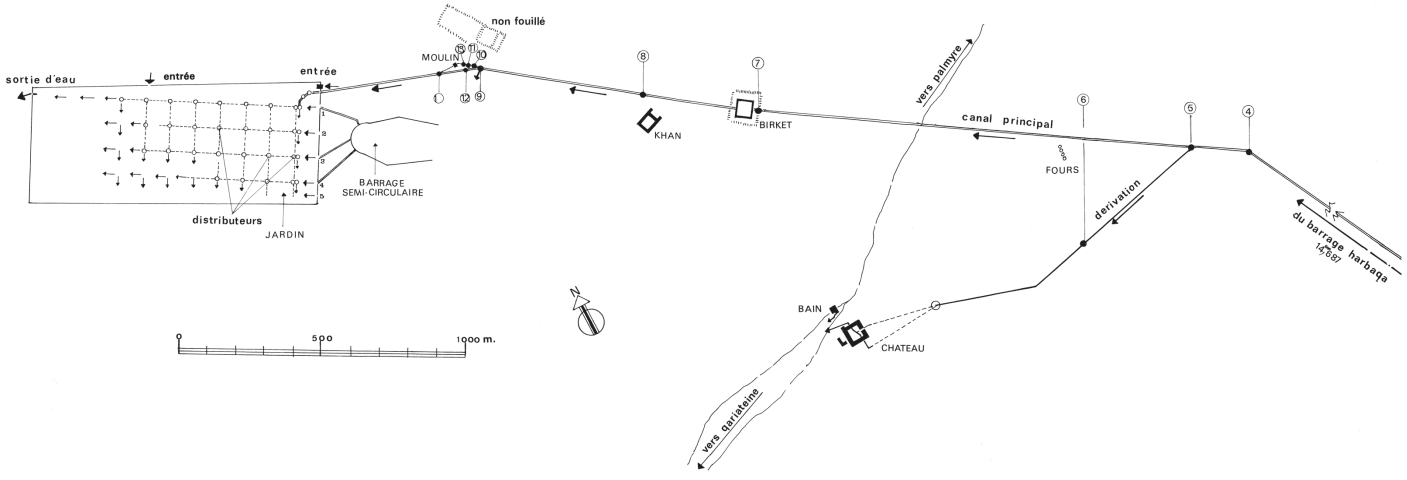

Figure 12.9 Qasr al-Hayr al-Gharbi, schematic plan of the site.
After Schlumberger (1986); permission of Presses de l'Ifpo.

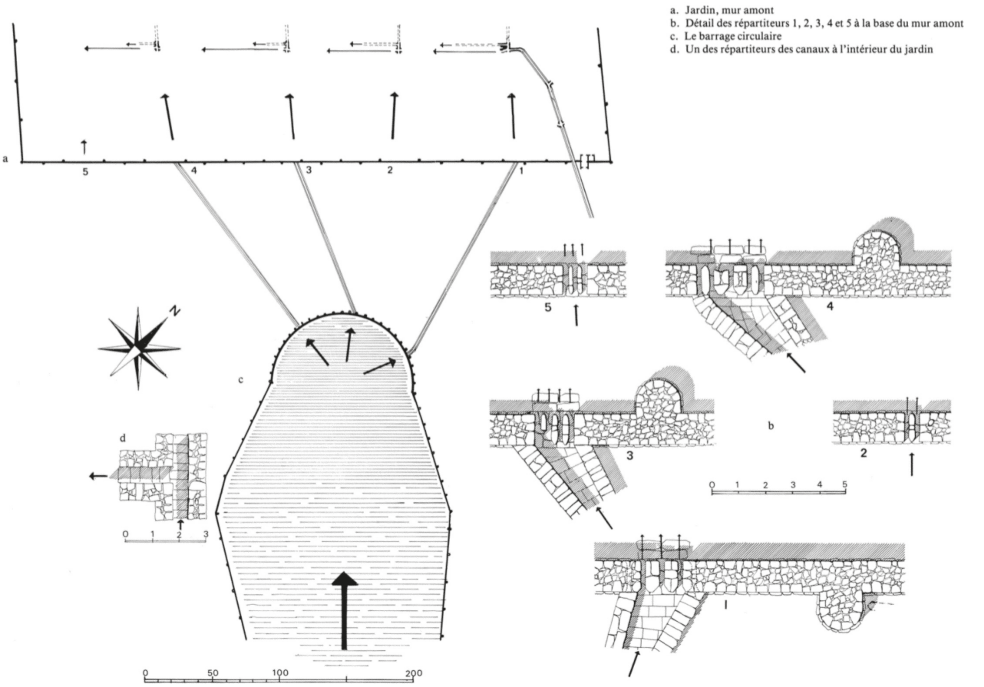

Figure 12.10 Qasr al-Hayr al-Gharbi, plan of the curved dam and the eastern part of the agricultural enclosure. After Schlumberger (1986); permission of Presses de l'Ifpo.

are extended areas covered with numerous mud-brick structures, mostly houses but also further aristocratic residences. Most of the site is, however, covered by hydro-agricultural features. It begins with a 27-kilometre-long qanat bringing water from artesian springs in the al-Kawm basin. This water was mainly used to supply the palace, the bath and the large enclosure. A water mill was built on a branch along the last part of the qanat (Figure 12.13). There is also a diversion dam across a large ephemeral stream, and two huge agricultural enclosures covering respectively 746 and 160 hectares, each enclosed by impressive walls regularly reinforced by semi-circular buttresses. Main aqueducts built of stone cross the two enclosures; they have diverting devices that were followed by irrigation channels dug in the soil, in order to irrigate most of the surface area of the two enclosures (Figure 12.14). Two structures, stables and storehouse, complete the system related to agricultural exploitation. Archaeobotanical studies attest the cultivation on site of wheat, barley, vines, olive trees, fig trees, millet, lentils and capers. Other plants, such as sesame, coriander, peas, date trees, pomegranates, melons, cucumbers, almonds and different kinds of nuts, were probably imported from elsewhere, from the Euphrates Valley or western Syria. Some of the structures of Qasr al-Hayr al-Sharqi were already abandoned by the mid-eighth century, but the palace, the large enclosure and some of the houses continued to be occupied until the late ninth to early tenth century.

Figure 12.11 Qasr al-Hayr al-Sharqi, plan of the site.
Survey and drawing Sophie Reynard, Denis Genequand and Marion Berti.

Figure 12.12 Qasr al-Hayr al-Sharqi, plan of the northern part of the site, including the palace, the bath, the large enclosure and the northern and eastern settlement areas. Drawing Marion Berti and Sophie Reynard.

Figure 12.13 Qasr al-Hayr al-Sharqi, view of the water mill during excavation. Photo Denis Genequand.

All this allows these sites to be considered not only as palaces surrounded by a few structures of minor importance, but as complex settlements combining different components and fulfilling a definite number of functions. There is one broad category – the Umayyad aristocratic settlements – but a very wide range of types outlined here through the four preceding examples.

AGRICULTURE AND ECONOMY

Many of the Umayyad aristocratic settlements, taking in the four examples described above, include a large agricultural component that is manifested archaeologically by different kinds of features.[7] The most common is the presence of hydro-agricultural structures, such as dams, reservoirs, aqueducts, qanats, water channels,

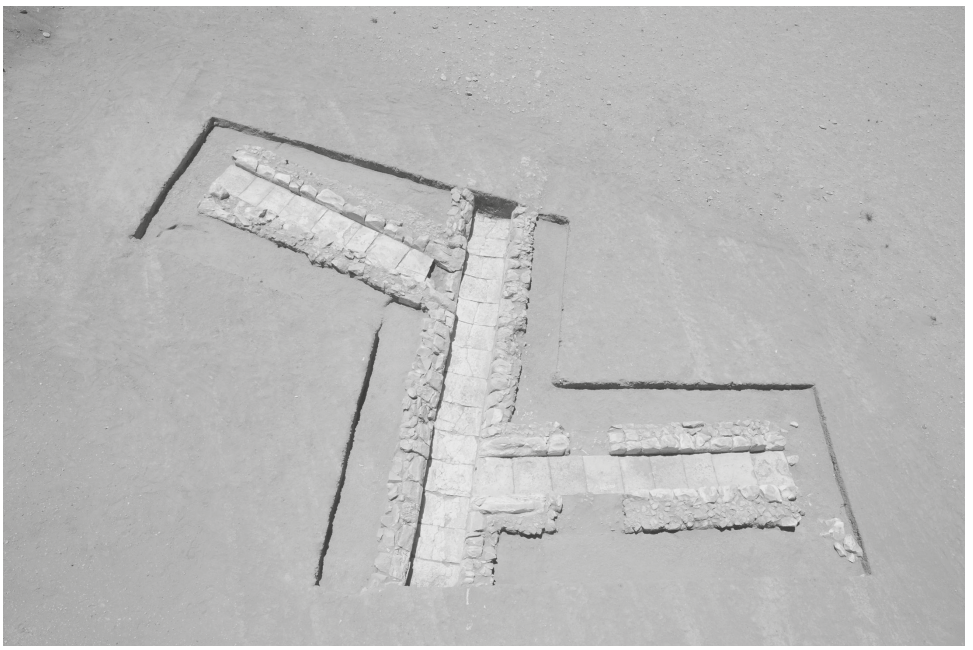

Figure 12.14 Qasr al-Hayr al-Sharqi, view of one of the diverting devices along the aqueduct inside the eastern agricultural enclosure.
Photo Denis Genequand.

or agricultural enclosures. These are found almost everywhere an agricultural component exists and can be very simple or combined into complex and extensive irrigation systems. A number of sites also display industrial structures related to the transformation of agricultural products: oil presses (Qasr al-Hayr al-Sharqi, ʿAyn al-Sil, perhaps Humayma, and al-Bakhraʾ), wineries (Umm al-Walid, Khirbat al-Mafjar, and probably Qasr al-Hayr al-Sharqi), water mills (Qasr al-Hayr al-Gharbi, Qasr al-Hayr al-Sharqi, Maʿan, and Khirbat al-Mafjar) or wool manufacture (Balis). Other structures, such as warehouses and storerooms (Qasr al-Hayr al-Sharqi) or stables (Qasr al-Hayr al-Gharbi, Qasr al-Hayr al-Sharqi, and Jabal Says) also point to an agricultural component. Finally, there are a handful of sites where archaeobotanical or archaeozoological studies were conducted which clearly attest to agricultural practice or livestock rearing (Qasr al-Hayr al-Sharqi and Humayma).

Beside the archaeological evidence briefly summarised here, it is also necessary to account for written sources, which attest to an agricultural function for some of the Umayyad aristocratic settlements. However, although written sources often record investments in farmsteads and agricultural production units by the elites, or their ownership of the same, in most cases a clear link between the such investments and the aristocratic settlements known archaeologically is missing. For example, several sons of ʿAbd al-Malik had vast agricultural estates in the Euphrates Valley and in the Jazira (Maslama b. ʿAbd al-Malik: Nahr Maslama; Hisham b. ʿAbd al-Malik: al-Hani and al-Mari, and Nahr Dawrin; Saʿid b. ʿAbd al-Malik: Nahr Saʿid).[8] But none of these estates is clearly reported to have included any kind of residence or palace.

The sources also show that different kinds of agricultural estates – for which a whole variety of different terms were used – were in the hands of the elites in different parts of Greater Syria: *qarya* (Abu Sufyan b. Harb in al-Qubbash or Biqinnis),[9] *duwayra* (Hisham b. ʿAbd al-Malik in al-Zaytuna),[10] *manzil* (Hisham b. ʿAbd al-Malik in Qutayfa),[11] or *mazraʿa* (Sulayman b. ʿAbd al-Malik in Sulaymaniyya; Abu al-Ward al-Kilabi in Khusaf).[12] But here again, despite the precision of the sources, no definite identification can be made with some of the Umayyad aristocratic settlements that are known archaeologically, nor is it made clear whether or not these places were linked with a residence or palace.

On the other hand, the sources frequently refer to palatial or residential structures where the caliphs and other Muslim elites were temporarily or more permanently living in the countryside. In most instances, these are called *qusur* (sing. *qasr*). Many of them are clearly identified with Umayyad aristocratic settlements: among them, Qastal, al-Muwaqqar, al-Faddayn, ʿUsays/Jabal Says, al-Bakhraʾ, and others.[13] However, in most cases, there is no indication in the sources that these *qusur* had an agricultural part, although it is well attested by archaeology.

The clearest example of direct correlation between the texts and the archaeology is the estate of the Abbasid family in Humayma in southern Jordan, which, according to sources, included a *qasr*, a mosque, an extended olive grove and a pre-existent village (*qarya*).[14] All these elements have been confirmed by archaeology.

Umayyad aristocratic settlements as agricultural estates

If we consider the entirety of Bilad al-Sham, 22 of the 38 Umayyad aristocratic settlements actually known archaeologically display agricultural activities (mostly cultivation, but also stock rearing), that is almost 58 per cent of them.[15] However, greater knowledge of several sites would quite possibly raise this up to about 75 per cent. It is clear that agriculture is a major component of most Umayyad aristocratic settlements and it should be taken into consideration when discussing their different functions. By comparison, only 16 sites have a mosque (that is 42 per cent) and 14 a bath (37 per cent), both elements often considered as important components of these settlements in the literature. The weight of agriculture, and therefore of the economic function, is really significant and thus requires some further discussion and explanation.

An initial remark is that there is, in general, a close connection between extensive hydro-agricultural features and industrial structures related to the transformation of agricultural products. The sites with oil presses, water mills or wineries are also those with the more developed and extended water systems and enclosures. In particular, the development of water mills with horizontal wheels in steppe land areas, where they are not known to have been used before, indicates a specific requirement of the economy.

Another point is whether these industrial structures were intended to produce for a local consumption system or for export elsewhere. The two possibilities can certainly coexist. If we consider cereals, it is well known that they keep better if they are whole (that is, in grain) than milled, and that they were usually transported as grain. Water mills would therefore more likely be related to local consumption and would clearly be useful at sites like Qasr al-Hayr al-Sharqi, Khirbat al-Mafjar, and

Maʿan, for which there is good evidence that a substantial population was living at the sites or in the surroundings. In Qasr al-Hayr al-Gharbi, where there are no residential structures other than the palace and where it seems difficult to suppose that there was a significant occupation through the year, one might wonder whether the flour ground on the site was also exported. Oil and wine were always produced close to the olive groves and vineyards: oil presses and wineries are therefore related both to local consumption and to exportation, depending on the size of their production. Wool manufacture, as found in Balis, cannot be intended only for the inhabitants of the settlement in Balis and is likely to be the first step of a process – the manufacturing of fabrics – that would be continued in an urban centre.

Beyond these preliminary remarks, the main point to be investigated is the place of the Umayyad aristocratic settlements in the rural economy and more generally what their economic role was in the first half of the eighth century. In what follows it is argued that the Umayyad aristocratic settlements of Bilad al-Sham are a consequence of focused elite interest in the region that had become the dynastic, administrative, and military centre of the new empire, as well as more ubiquitous incentives to invest in land that affected most of the new Arabian imperial elite across all the conquered territories. Some of the context for the developments in Bilad al-Sham can be found in the pre-Islamic period, but the specific circumstances of the Umayyad period also led to new forms of settlement that are unique in some respects to that era. That said, it is also apparent that many of the sites remained viable and in some use well into the ninth century. This continuity of economic viability into the Abbasid period has probably thus far been underestimated.

Before the Islamic conquest, in the near-eastern provinces of the Byzantine Empire, large estates were for a very long time considered by scholars as exceptional, agricultural development being traditionally ascribed to a peasantry living in villages and to small landowners.[16] However, the structure of the village as reflected by archaeology and the regime of landed property are two distinct things and it is often really difficult to analyse the relationship between the two of them.[17] Texts and inscriptions attest the existence of large private or imperial estates that can include villages or even townships. For instance, such is the case of al-Huwwarin (antique *Euareia*) in the sixth century, a small city belonging to the estate of the count (*comes*) and curator Magnus.[18] Interestingly, it is perhaps in the seizure of an estate of the very high Byzantine aristocracy that one should look for the origin of the estate of caliph Yazid b. Muʿawiya in the same place a century later.[19] If archaeology is not able to recognise an estate composed of one or several villages, it has recently been better able to recognise those that are of the *villa rustica* type, which are not necessarily very different from the Umayyad aristocratic settlements. One should think especially of those that include a residence, an enclosure and hydro-agricultural structures, such as Qasr Ibn Wardan, Stabl ʿAntar, and Marina in northern Syria, Ramat Hanadiv in Palestine, or the sixth-century phase of Qasr al-Hallabat in Jordan.[20]

Like their Byzantine predecessors had done in the eastern provinces, the Umayyad elites made investments in rural landed property in Bilad al-Sham, and the aristocratic settlements presenting proof of agricultural activities partly reflect this. There is no reason to think that these agricultural estates, the property limits of which might be more extended than demonstrated by archaeological structures directly linked to the

residences and palaces, were not profitable enterprises. For instance, estates around the residences or palaces of Umm al-Walid, al-Qastal and al-Muwaqqar in Jordan could also have included villages or hamlets situated in the surroundings. Indeed, these developments appear in part to be prompted by a need for income among the new Muslim elites. However, this economic interpretation is also not exclusive of other functions attached to these settlements, especially political and diplomatic functions that will be discussed in the next section of the chapter.

In the early Islamic period, between the seventh and the ninth century, Muslim elites had two main sources of income: wages paid by the state for administrative or military duties and revenues from landed property.[21] For the most part, for people who were not receiving a salary from the state, landed property was an absolute necessity for generating an income. For the others, the best strategy was also to invest part of sums received as wages to yield a profit. For all members of the early Islamic elite, whatever their place in the hierarchy, landed property was therefore a necessity and was encouraged by the state through the distribution of unoccupied or abandoned land as *qatiʿa*s ('alienable land grants'). Landed property could be urban or rural. Of course, it is the second form that is interesting here and a majority of the Umayyad aristocratic settlements should be considered as being landed properties devoted to agriculture with the intention of bringing in an income to their owners. However, this agricultural and economic role was not always present and is not sufficient to explain the emergence of aristocratic settlements almost everywhere in the steppe lands of Bilad al-Sham.

It is also important to note that Bilad al-Sham is not the only place where investments in rural landed property and the creation of agricultural estates occurred. The Sufyanids, in particular Muʿawiya b. Abi Sufyan, seem to have invested a large part of the revenues of the first conquests in the agricultural development of the regions of Medina, Mecca, and Taʾif.[22] Many agricultural estates – mostly devoted to wheat and dates, but also sometime to vineyards – belonging to caliphs and other members of the elite are known through the written sources from the seventh and eighth centuries.[23] Dams for irrigation are mentioned on several occasions.[24] If these estates are not yet known archaeologically, a few dams likely related to agriculture and dated to the early Islamic period have been documented in the Hijaz. Two of these, close to Taʾif and Medina, are even attributed to Muʿawiya b. Abi Sufyan himself by inscriptions.[25] In the seventh century, some of the large estates were able to yield up to 90 to 100 tons of wheat annually – their surface area is, however, not known – and were, of course, a source of considerable income for their owners.[26]

Indeed, it is very difficult to estimate the profitability of an agricultural estate without many parameters that are completely missing to the archaeologist. It is only possible to calculate theoretical yields taking account of the cultivated areas or thanks to some industrial structures. There is no need here to go much farther into these estimations, just two examples will suffice. For cereals, with a mean annual yield of 1.2 tons per hectare – which is an average figure – the irrigated enclosure of Qasr al-Hayr al-Gharbi would provide 56 tons and the larger one in Qasr al-Hayr al-Sharqi 895 tons.[27] Based on storage capacities, the winery in Umm al-Walid could provide between 23,000 and 33,000 litres of wine, corresponding to 4.8 to 7 hectares of vineyards.[28] These are only theoretical figures, but they show clearly that beyond

about 8 hectares for cereals and 2–3 hectares for vineyards, the production is high enough to yield a substantial profit.

In the archaeological record, some forms of evidence demonstrate without ambiguity that the hydro-agricultural systems functioned and that they were maintained, even if they are sometimes oversized and ostentatious (modifications to the dams and to their outlets in Qasr al-Hayr al-Gharbi[29] and in Umm al-Walid[30]). Other evidence show signs that production was greater than initially planned (the storage capacity at the winery in Umm al-Walid was much enlarged in a second phase),[31] or that the industrial structures were modified to be more efficient (modification of the position of the axis of rotation of the wheel in the water mill of Qasr al-Hayr al-Gharbi).[32] With more modern excavations on peripheral structures in Umayyad settlements, these kinds of observations would certainly be more numerous.

Another element points to the economic viability of some of the Umayyad aristocratic settlements: their continuous occupation into the Abbasid period. Although stratigraphical and chronological data are missing for many sites, some examples demonstrate that the system lasted in part well into the ninth century, which means it was profitable and not only artificially supported by subsidies from the state or revenues of the Caliphate. Written sources clearly attest that the estate and *qasr* of al-Faddayn remained in the hands of the same family at least from the reign of Hisham b. ʿAbd al-Malik until 813, when Saʿid b. Khalid al-Faddayni organised a revolt against the Abbasid caliph al-Maʾmun.[33] According to the geographers, the settlement in Maʿan remained a property of the Umayyad family probably until the tenth century.[34] From an archaeological point of view, both Qasr al-Hayr al-Sharqi and Qastal witnessed an occupation lasting at least until the end of the ninth century, occupation which would have been pointless if there had not been a minimum profitability to expect from the lands belonging to the two estates.[35] A similar situation probably also prevailed at al-Muwaqqar, Khirbat al-Mafjar, and elsewhere, but published data on the nature of these later occupations are insufficient to really confirm such a hypothesis.

Given these elements, one has to admit that the 22 Umayyad aristocratic settlements presenting evidence of agricultural activities must have yielded enough to provide an income to their owners and to be fully integrated into the rural economic system of the seventh to eighth centuries. If they were perhaps not always as productive as the large estates of the Euphrates Valley or the Jazira, that were irrigated by large perennial rivers, their number and their wide geographical distribution made them one of the main actors of the rural economy in Bilad al-Sham, alongside the numerous villages and townships with late Roman origins that were still settled.

It should also be mentioned that the economic role of the Umayyad aristocratic settlements was not only limited to agricultural production; they also participated significantly to consumption. On the one hand, as discussed above, for the new ruling elites, it was a matter of investing the revenues of wages, taxes, and conquests. On the other hand, for their construction and maintenance, these settlements generated important economic activity benefiting a whole region. They also became places of consumption of manufactured goods produced in urban centres. Therefore, the Umayyad aristocratic settlements participated significantly in the preservation or renewal of the relative economic prosperity characterising the Umayyad period,

probably as much as, and in a complementary manner to, the programs of transformation and economic revitalisation (commercial and industrial) conducted by the caliphs and governors in the large urban centres of Bilad al-Sham.

Finally, one has to insist that the very existence of large rural estates in the hands of the aristocracy was a relatively new phenomenon in the Near East and at first slightly marginal in the settlement pattern of the countryside and in the economic system. As shown by Morony or Banaji, this phenomenon started during Late Antiquity, but really grew in the Umayyad period, when the caliphs took and distributed lands to the new ruling elites.[36] It continued in the Abbasid period in the Jazira and in Iraq. It developed concurrently to the exploitation of the countryside by villages and farms and sometime to the detriment of the latter. In the steppe lands of Bilad al-Sham, this phenomenon also extended well beyond the limits of sedentary village occupation.

If compared with what was prevalent in the Byzantine period and with what would be the norm in the Abbasid period, the number of rural aristocratic settlements characterised by the existence of a palace or a residence is remarkably high in the Umayyad period. It expresses the desire of a large part of the Umayyad elites for living on their rural estates and not in urban centres. It is obviously a social reality peculiar to the Umayyad period, a social reality that will disappear under the Abbasids, when the elites will again be living essentially in an urban environment, often gathered together around the caliphal court in Baghdad or in Samarra, even if they owned rural estates.

POLITICS AND DIPLOMACY

In order to talk about politics and diplomacy, a preliminary and necessary step is to make a distinction between settlements related to a medium- to low-ranked aristocracy wishing to invest in landed property and develop alternative forms of income and those related to the caliphal power that may have had an important political role without neglecting the landed aspect. Humayma and Umm al-Walid belong to the first category, which also includes other sites like Maʿan, Khan al-Zabib, and al-Faddayn. The second category includes all the sites that were founded by caliphs and princes, such as Qasr al-Hayr al-Gharbi and Qasr al-Hayr al-Sharqi (Hisham b. ʿAbd al-Malik), Mushatta (most likely al-Walid b. Yazid), al-Muwaqqar (Yazid b. ʿAbd al-Malik), and Jabal Says (al-Walid b. ʿAbd al-Malik). Most of them include a sumptuous palace, but this is not a *sine qua non*, as shown by Qasr Burquʿ, an extremely simple settlement partly rebuilt by al-Walid b. ʿAbd al-Malik in 700 when he was still an *amir*,[37] or by Qusayr ʿAmra, built by al-Walid b. Yazid while heir apparent.[38]

The next step is to define more exactly this political role and show on which basis such an interpretation is possible. After Grabar, who explored several possibilities including the political one,[39] it is the German scholar Gaube who first clearly put the political aspect to the fore in explaining the emergence of the so-called 'desert castles' of the Umayyads.[40] He based his demonstration on the political weight taken by Arab tribal groups during Late Antiquity and on the manner in which the Byzantine Empire dealt with them. He saw the 'desert castles' as the many places of residence for caliphs obliged to live in turn with each of the main tribal groups allied to them. ʿAbd al-Malik and his descendants would be the worthy successors of the Jafnid

dynasty, to which Byzantium delegated part of the control of the steppe lands of the eastern provinces in the sixth century.

This explanation is attractive, but probably gives too much weight to the Jafnid dynasty in elaborating a model of domination over other tribal groups. The Umayyads were well enough aware of the need for political negotiation with the tribes not to have to copy or reproduce a system created by the Jafnids in the first half of the sixth century and abandoned in the second half of the same century.[41] One should add that, despite frequent claims in the literature, until now no palace or country residence attributable on a solid basis to the Jafnid dynasty has been identified.[42] The major interest of Gaube's contribution is not so much in the details of his analysis, but in theorising an alternative solution to the romantic and pragmatic interpretations that had dominated the debate about the functions of the Umayyad aristocratic settlements since the 1930s.

During the second half of the seventh and the eighth century, Bilad al-Sham was dominated by three and then two main groups of Arabic-speaking tribes.[43] There are, on one side, the tribes that were in Syria before the conquest, amongst which Kalb of the Qudaʿa confederation is the most important, along with Tanukh, Ghassan, Judham, Salih, and Lakhm. These were Christian tribes, which gradually, or quickly for some of them, converted to Islam. Later on, after new alliances, some of these will be part of the group called Yamani tribes. On the other side, one finds tribes or tribal groups that arrived at the time of the conquest or shortly afterwards. These are mainly grouped in the Qays confederation (Sulaym, Thaqif, ʿAbd al-Qays, Numayr and Kilab) or represented by the tribes of Himyar and Hamdan of the Qahtan confederation. The second part of the seventh century is characterised by a very strong antagonism between the three groups, which culminated in the second *fitna* (civil war), when Qudaʿa and allied tribes supported the Umayyads, while Qays and Qahtan took the side of ʿAbdallah b. al-Zubayr. The culmination of this conflict was the battle of Marj Rahit in 684, resulting in the victory of Kalb and allied tribes and the accession to the throne of the Umayyad Marwan b. al-Hakam. After the second civil war, a precarious balance was found; Qudaʿa and Qahtan joined together in a large confederation called Yaman, still in opposition to Qays, but the Umayyads had to maintain or reconstruct good relations with each group in order to keep their hegemony. Under all the Sufyanid and then Marwanid caliphs, the large tribes, Kalb foremost among them, formed the base of the Umayyad power, supported the caliphate, and provided the necessary troops for the Syrian armies according to a system organised already under the first Umayyad caliph, Muʿawiya b. Abi Sufyan. The rest of the inhabitants of Bilad al-Sham remained in majority Christian, particularly in cities and townships, and had no particular reason to support the caliphate actively.

How, in these conditions, did the Sufyanid and then the Marwanid caliphs, in particular, exercise their power? Two concepts, in which the aristocratic settlements of the Umayyad princes play a fundamental role, are particularly important for understanding this problem: a concept of power based on decentralisation and on a form of mobility.

Decentralisation and mobility

The first concept, decentralisation, which is also a corollary of a patrimonial conception of power in the Umayyad family, was outlined by Bacharach and fully developed

by Borrut.[44] Since the reign of ʿAbd al-Malik (685–705), Bilad al-Sham had been divided into different zones of influence between his sons and their descendants. This division resulted in the temporary or more permanent settling of the princes in the area ascribed to them, with three main aims: representing the caliphal power understood from a familial perspective, maintaining links with the local populations and their own elites, and appropriating a part of the land of Syria, in the literal and figurative meaning. Hisham b. ʿAbd al-Malik settled in wider Palmyrena, his brothers Maslama and Saʿid in the Euphrates and Balikh valleys, al-Walid at Qaryatayn and in the basaltic *harra* east of the Hawran, Sulayman in Palestine, and Yazid and his son al-Walid in the Balqaʾ.[45]

The second concept, mobility in exercising power, was also fully investigated by Borrut.[46] The Marwanid caliphs never really stayed in their capital city, Damascus, but travelled through Bilad al-Sham, on a regular cycle or not, and resided according to affinities in one region or the other. The best example is given by al-Baladhuri, describing ʿAbd al-Malik moving according to a seasonal rhythm between al-Sinnabra (on Lake Tiberias), al-Jabiya (in the Jawlan), Damascus, and Baalbek.[47] Another example is provided by his son Hisham, who, conversely, hardly left his area of wider Palmyrena and resided during most of his reign in Rusafa.[48] This caliphal mobility, away from Damascus, evidently required an infrastructure allowing the caliphs to move and to settle for a while in different places, whether in urban centres or in the countryside.

This combination of decentralisation, familial patrimonialism, and mobility in exercising power, as well as the political importance of the main tribal groups largely explain the existence of caliphal and princely residences in most steppe land areas of Bilad al-Sham. These are the places that were allowing contact between the caliphal power and the regional and local elites, whatever their status, whether tribal chiefs or chieftains, governors, magistrates, or eminent persons in cities and countryside. The importance and status of the latter, as well as the very nature of the contacts and their frequency, explain the diversity in the form and size of the settlements devoted to this role. To summarise: caliphal investments in sumptuous rural settlements reflect the needs of a policy based on contact and negotiation with regional and local aristocracies.

The architecture of the Umayyad palaces accounts for this political role, but also, at the same time, for more pleasant activities of court life. Many of them include an audience or reception hall. In the textual sources, the term *majlis* is used to describe a meeting, a group of persons, or the very fact of holding an audience with a political or entertainment purpose. The same term was eventually used to designate the place where such a meeting or audience was held. Several texts, including the famous *Risala* of ʿAbd al-Hamid b. Yahya, insist on the importance of the *majlis* and on the necessity to take part in it; therefore a room in or near the palace should be devoted to it.[49] At Mushatta, the audience hall and immediate surrounding areas were the first to be built and eventually completed.[50] Similar observations have been made elsewhere, notably in Khirbat al-Mafjar, Balis, or even Qusayr ʿAmra, where the bath and attached audience hall were given much more attention than other structures around them.[51] Aristocratic settlements where no room or place seems to be devoted to the *majlis*, such as Umm al-Walid or Khan al-Zabib for instance, are in most cases those that are not

directly related to a caliph or prince of the Umayyad family and certainly had a far less important political and representative role, being more closely related to the economic function developed in the first part of this chapter.

Setting and visual expression of power

As places for political meetings and as places of power, the Umayyad aristocratic settlements also had to reflect the magnificence and authority of their builders through their architecture and their environment. It is the rooting of the legitimacy of the Umayyad princes in the landscape of their zone of influence. The façades of Qasr al-Hayr al-Gharbi and Mushatta, or the audience hall of Khirbat al-Mafjar are well-known examples that have been discussed at length in the literature. Far less investigated is the direct environment of the palaces and residences. As stated before, many of the Umayyad aristocratic settlements include agricultural enclosures, often much smaller than the very extensive ones in Qasr al-Hayr al-Sharqi or Maʿan, but enclosed by impressive walls. One should imagine a tribal chief living in the steppe lands meeting an Umayyad prince or caliph in a palace or residence surrounded by luxurious vegetation. This is certainly another reason for the many hydraulic and agricultural structures found near and around the Umayyad aristocratic settlements. The control of water in a semi-arid or arid environment and an agriculture including plants well adapted to steppe lands – mostly olive trees, vineyards and cereals, as well as different kinds of fruit trees and leguminous plants, but certainly not delicate exotic species! – would allow both for making a profit and for creating the setting for the architecture that would feed directly into the image of power and wealth that the caliph or prince wants to project. This would explain the somewhat disproportionate manner in which some of the hydraulic and agricultural structures related to Umayyad aristocratic settlements were built, such as the huge Harbaqa dam or the 20-kilometre-long and pseudo-fortified walls of the agricultural enclosures in Qasr al-Hayr al-Sharqi.

Always looking for legitimacy, caliphs and princes of the Umayyad family wanted to affirm their power and the new religion with imposing building programs, like the Haram al-Sharif in Jerusalem, the great mosque of Damascus, or palaces in steppe lands that were surrounded by greenery. They also tried to reinforce their own reputation as builders and to counterbalance an architectural landscape that was still dominated by the creations of Late Antiquity linked to the Christian religion and the fallen power of Byzantium.

CONCLUSION

The residential, economic and political functions of the Umayyad aristocratic settlements stand out as key to understanding the emergence of these settlements and their relatively high number. These three functions can be of equal importance in some cases, but in others one function dominates and should be considered as the principal reason for the foundation of a specific settlement.

The first, shared by all of them and not discussed here in detail, is the residential function, as the places where the new Muslim elites of Bilad al-Sham were living.

The second is their political role. These residences were creating the practical conditions for an itinerant form of kingship, thereby allowing caliphs, princes or governors to exercise their patrimonial sovereignty over the Syrian countryside. And thus we see a dense network of sites emerging in connection with what can be termed an 'architecture of diplomacy'. Caliphal investments in sumptuous rural settlements reflect the needs of a policy based on contact and negotiation with regional and local aristocracies. The importance and status of the latter, as well as the very nature of the contacts and their frequency, explain the diversity in the form and size of the settlements devoted to this role.

The third is their economic role as investments in landed property and as an alternative source of income, independent from wages and prebends granted by the caliphal state.

The common point between these three functions is that they all characterise the takeover of a province of the Muslim Empire by the Umayyad family, its entourage and more generally by the new Muslim elites. They are also a means to give a greater visibility to, and to affirm the new caliphal power and the new religion by creating a monumental landscape representing power in absence. The abandonment of many of these settlements in Bilad al-Sham in the early Abbasid period and the fact that no new ones were founded after the fall of the Umayyad dynasty in 750 show beyond doubt that they were no longer in step with the political needs of the Abbasid caliphate, nor adapted to the new ambitions of the elites now predominantly living in an urban environment and concentrated at the court in Baghdad. The settlements with a well-developed economic role were the only ones that were able to maintain a certain level of prosperity after the fall of the Umayyads.

NOTES

1 The vast literature is summarised in Genequand 2012: 1–3. See for instance Lammens 1910; Musil 1928: 277–97; Sauvaget 1939; Sauvaget 1967; Gaube 1979; King 1992. Sauvaget was the first to postulate an economic function and saw in the 'desert castles' a form of 'agricultural colonisation' of new lands. This has been more or less generally accepted by scholars of early Islam, but has never really been demonstrated. On the architecture of the palaces and residences and their origins, see Genequand 2006a.
2 For a detailed typology of the Umayyad aristocratic settlements, taking into account the kind and number of components, see Genequand 2012, esp. Chap. 10.
3 Oleson 1997: 178–9; Oleson et al. 1999, 2003. See below for the textual sources.
4 Bujard and Genequand 2001; Genequand 2008.
5 Schlumberger 1986; Genequand 2006b, 2012: 161–74; Hillenbrand 2018.
6 Grabar et al. 1978; Genequand 2012: Chap. 7.
7 The following evidence is detailed, with all the necessary references, in Genequand 2012: Chap. 11.
8 Yaqut 1866–73: IV, 840; al-Tabari 1879–1901: II, 1735; al-Baladhuri 1866: 151, 179–80; Berthier 2001: 165; Heidemann 2003: 20–2; Borrut 2011: 230–1. For a wider overview of these sources, see Genequand 2012: 365.
9 Al-Baladhuri 1866: 129; Yaqut 1866–73: I, 702.
10 Al-Tabari 1879–1901: II, 1466–67; Genequand 2012: 367.
11 Al-Yaʿqubi 1892: 325.
12 Al-Tabari 1879–1901: II, 1828; III, 52.
13 Genequand 2012: 365–6.

14 *Akhbar al-dawla* 1971: 107–8, 149, 154, 195; al-Bakri 1876–77: I, 130; al-Baladhuri 1978: 87; al-Tabari 1879–1901: II, 1975; III, 25.
15 For the details of the statistical approach, see Genequand 2012: 368–9.
16 See for instance Tate 1992 for northern Syria or Villeneuve 1985 for the Hawran, or more generally Tate 1995.
17 Gatier 1994: 27–30.
18 Feissel 1985; Genequand 2012: 30.
19 Al-Tabari 1879–1901: II, 203, 427, 488; al-Isfahani 1868: 88; al-Masʿudi 1861–1917: V, 126; Yaqut 1866–73: II, 355.
20 Genequand 2012: 371; Genequand and Rousset 2016.
21 Kennedy 2004.
22 El-Ali 1959; Kister 1972: 89–90.
23 El-Ali 1959; Lecker 1989, 1996.
24 El-Ali 1959: 253.
25 Miles 1948; Grohmann 1962: 56–58; Hoyland 2006: 415–16; for references to the other dams, see Genequand 2012: 370.
26 El-Ali 1959: 254.
27 Genequand 2012: 371–2.
28 Genequand 2012: 339.
29 Genequand 2012: 255–7.
30 Genequand 2012: 259–64.
31 Genequand 2012: 333–4.
32 Genequand 2012: 345–8.
33 Ibn ʿAsakir 1995–98: 21, 56–7; Yaqut 1866–73: III, 858–9.
34 Ibn Hawqal 1938: 185; al-Istakhri 1927: 65; Genequand 2012: 367.
35 Genequand 2012: 99, 106, 115; Imbert 1992.
36 Morony 2004: 168–70; Banaji 2001: 136–7, 171–89 (on Egypt).
37 Gaube 1974; Helms 1991; Genequand 2012: 209.
38 Imbert 2015.
39 Grabar et al. 1978: 155–6.
40 Gaube 1979; see also Helms 1990, 1991.
41 On the Jafnid dynasty (the Ghassanids), see most recently Fisher 2011, Genequand and Robin 2015, and Fisher 2015.
42 Genequand 2015.
43 Crone 1980: 34–6; Rotter 1982.
44 Bacharach 1996; Borrut 2011: 391–5; on Umayyad patrimonialism, see also Décobert 2010.
45 For precise references, see Borrut 2011: 391–5 and Genequand 2012: 364–8.
46 Borrut 2011: 396–435.
47 Al-Baladhuri 1883: 200; Borrut 2011: 397–8, 403–10.
48 Genequand 2012: 40, 46, 48.
49 Northedge 2000: 51–2.
50 Genequand 2008: 132–5.
51 Genequand 2012: 200, 203, 224.

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CHAPTER THIRTEEN

THE UMAYYAD RED SEA AS AN ISLAMIC *MARE NOSTRUM*

Veronica Morriss and Donald Whitcomb

INTRODUCTION

Until recently, the importance of the Red Sea in the Umayyad period has largely been overlooked. There are limited literary sources describing activities in the Red Sea for this time, and only a few Umayyad-period sites have been thoroughly excavated. Rather than being evidence for decline or the reduction in trade, this lacuna in the data should be perceived as an invitation for new scholarship on this foundational period.

Scholars often look to trade with India as the primary indicator of economic and maritime activity, which does not resume in the region on a large scale until the later tenth century. However, this emphasis on international commerce overlooks the important role of the regional commodities trade, cabotage, and the movement of less exotic cargoes. This chapter will expand upon recent investigations that have made it possible to offer new insights into the development of maritime activity during the seventh and eighth centuries.

When we combine both literary and archaeological evidence, we see the emergence of several phenomena during the Umayyad period. These include the rise of state-sponsored grain export, the exploitation and development of resources from around the Red Sea periphery, the establishment of new ports, and the exertion of Umayyad dominion over the Red Sea. We propose that the Umayyads transformed the Red Sea into an Early Islamic *mare nostrum* that allowed them to extract resources from around the maritime littoral, establish shipping lanes, and tap into dispersed trading networks in East Africa and beyond.

REVISIONIST APPROACHES TO THE RED SEA

Maritime activities in the Red Sea during the Umayyad period should not be treated as an afterthought or a footnote to the Late Roman, Fatimid, or Mamluk Periods. Unfortunately, however, interpretation and analysis of the evidence is complicated by 1) limited archaeological finds and contemporary historical references from the first two centuries of Islam, 2) a scholarly bias towards classical remains, and 3) an entrenched narrative of regional decline following the conquest.[1]

Red Sea scholarship has focused on periods that are well-attested historically and archaeologically, with a strong emphasis on the classical period. The excavations of ports such as Berenike and Myos Hormos have yielded a comprehensive assemblage of evidence for Greco-Roman seafaring in the Red Sea (Figures 13.1 and 13.2). In contrast, few Early Islamic-era ports have been as thoroughly explored, with Ayla as an exception. The contrast between these datasets has contributed to a seeming absence of evidence for the Early Islamic period and an impression that there was minimal ongoing maritime activity.

Revisionist approaches have challenged models of decline and abandonment for the late antique-early Islamic transition in Syria-Palestine and Jordan.[2] These studies demonstrate the resiliency of late antique society and its economy. It has been proposed that several transformations that had been used as evidence for economic and regional decline following the conquest in fact began as early as the fourth century CE, and thus should not be attributed to the transition to Muslim rule. For instance, the encroachment of commercial and industrial complexes into the monumental streets and civic areas of the classical cities were once interpreted as evidence of degeneration and the shift from 'polis to madina'.[3] However, new models have proposed that the influx of commerce and industry was not only well-underway by the sixth century CE, but that they are indicators of a resilient and expanding economy.

Walmsley proposed that ʿAbd al-Malik's introduction of a new monetary system and the refurbishment of road networks in Bilad al-Sham were components of a much larger effort to boost revenue and increase trade. The standardization of weights and measures was also an aspect of ʿAbd al-Malik's Arabizing reforms, and would have likely facilitated commercial activities.[4] It has been argued that the Marwanid policy of extensive agricultural development and improving 'intra- and inter-regional' communications stimulated the local economy and encouraged the expansion of mercantile ties.[5] This raises the question: did the impact of these reforms extend to the Red Sea?

Studies by Kristoffer Damgaard and Timothy Power have reexamined the available archaeological and literary evidence, and have proposed the presence of significant maritime activity in the region before the tenth century.[6] The development of commerce had been associated with the Fatimid revitalization of the India trade, but Power has demonstrated that many of the Red Sea ports had earlier foundations. Literary traditions link their development to the conquest, and later in the ninth century to the East African trade in gold and slaves. Nonetheless, Power argues that 'economic activity in the wider Red Sea Basin seems to have been generally muted between the late sixth and early ninth centuries'.[7]

While Power acknowledges wider economic growth in Bilad al-Sham, spurred by the 'pro-development' activities of the Umayyads, he proposes a different situation for the Red Sea. Power characterizes the Marwanid economic policies in the Red Sea provinces as being focused on the intensive exploitation of the tax base, rather than the expansion of production or commercial networks, and argues that these policies ultimately impeded economic growth.[8] This interpretation suggests a break between the expansion of Muslim political rule in the region and the appearance of later trading networks in the ninth and tenth centuries. This chapter takes a contrary view and proposes that the available evidence from the Red Sea appears to confirm

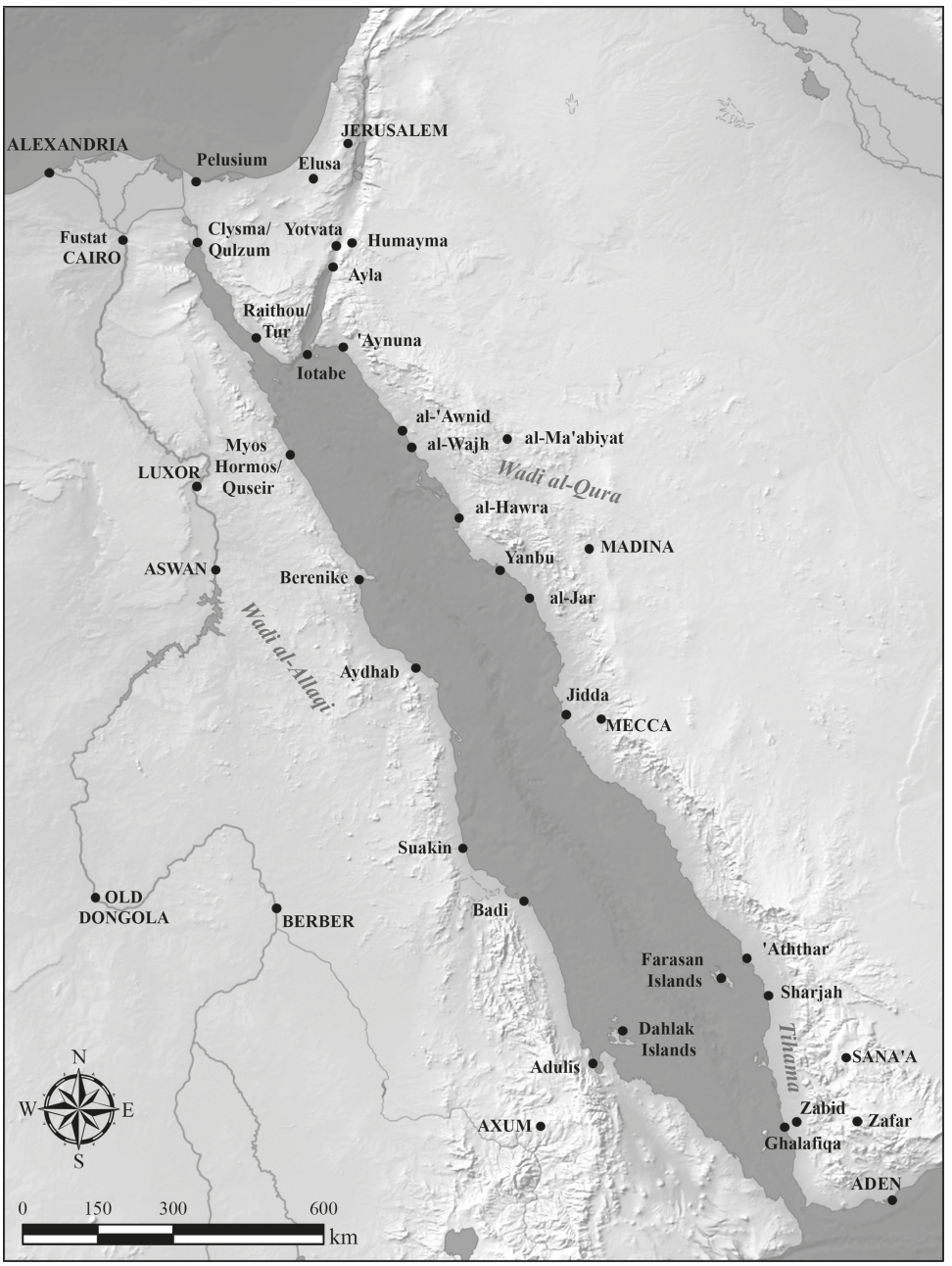

Figure 13.1 Map of the Red Sea and the sites mentioned in the text. Map by Veronica Morriss and Donald Whitcomb.

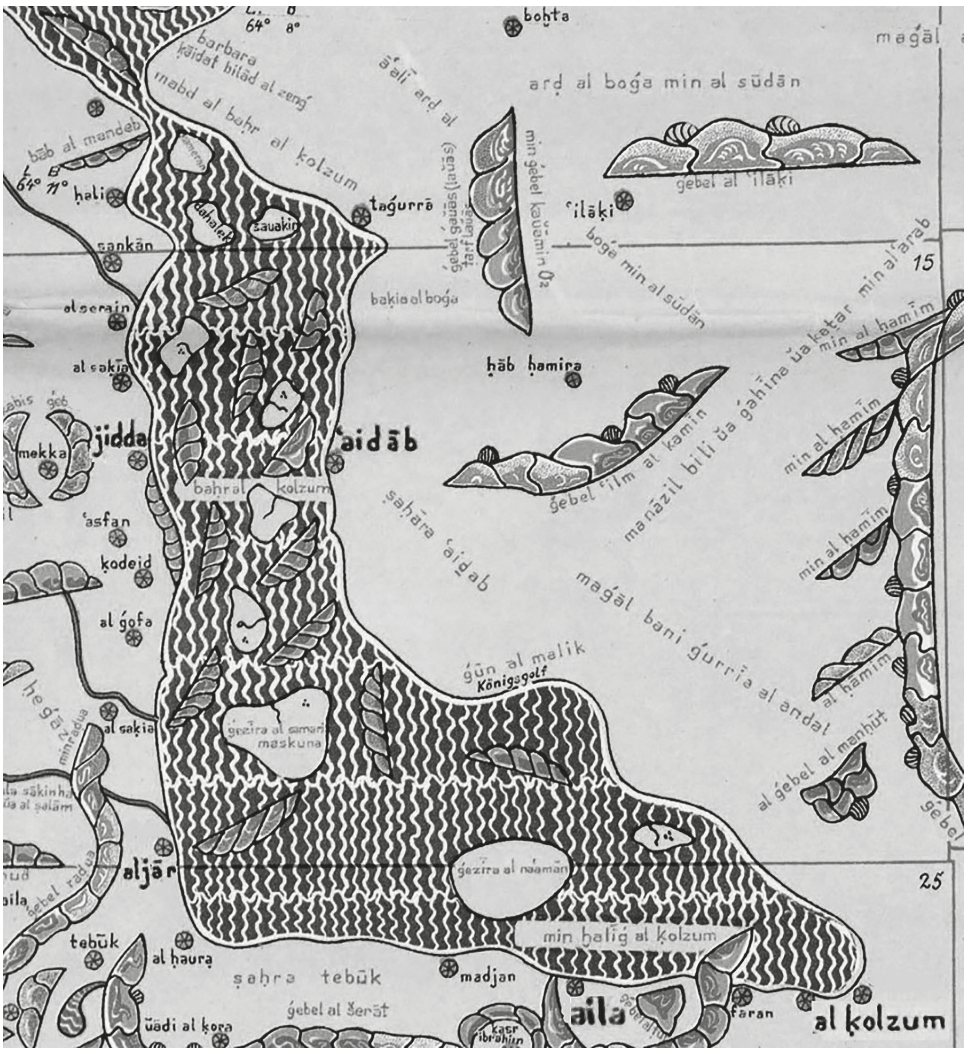

Figure 13.2 A transliterated copy of Muhammed al-Idrisi's depiction of the Red Sea. Courtesy of Donald Whitcomb.

a sequence of economic development beginning in the late seventh and early eighth century. It is likely that the roots of the ninth-century 'gold rush' and slave trade developed in the first century after Muhammad.

Damgaard proposes that the development of Red Sea infrastructure under the early caliphs indirectly stimulated the mercantile growth that begins in the mid-eighth century. His comprehensive examination of the Red Sea ports and their hinterland connections demonstrates evidence for a dynamic and developing Early Islamic mercantile network. He uses Ayla as a model, documenting its inception during the conquest, its rapid development into a redistribution powerhouse, and its subsequent transformation into a center of inter-regional exchange during the late eighth century.[9]

Building upon the body of data compiled by these scholars, this chapter seeks to further develop our understanding of the Red Sea during the Umayyad period. It will demonstrate that many of the maritime activities that would rise to prominence in later periods were either occurring or developing under the Umayyads.

THE PRE-ISLAMIC PERIOD

On the eve of Islam, the Red Sea was a contested zone of inter-regional exchange. To understand the transformations that occurred during the seventh and eighth centuries, it is necessary to provide a brief overview of maritime activity during the years that preceded the Prophet Muhammad and the Believers' movement.[10]

Characterizations of the pre-Islamic Red Sea are dominated by the first and second century CE 'maritime silk road'. During this time, Rome extended its hegemony over the Red Sea, providing a ready market for the lucrative trade with the Far East. Classical sources, including the first century CE *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*, provide details on Indian Ocean trade networks, the ports that serviced these routes, and the commodities that were traded.[11] The Egyptian ports of Berenike and Myos Hormos were the primary northern Red Sea nodes in this network, facilitating the movement of goods across the Wadi Hammamat and down the Nile to the emporium of Alexandria and then beyond. Far to the south, Adulis was the principal port along the present-day Eritrean coast and was a major emporium for the kingdom of Axum.[12]

The pre-Islamic Arabian ports are less well known. *Leuke Kome* is mentioned both in the *Periplus* and by Strabo as the foremost Nabataean port in northwestern Arabia.[13] The port facilitated the shipment of aromatics between Petra and the Red Sea trading network.[14] Recent investigations at Aynuna by a Polish-Saudi team have made a strong case for its identification as *Leuke Kome*.[15] The Port of Aila's origins may have also been closely connected to the Nabataean incense trade, which the southern Arabian kingdoms held a monopoly over.[16] Southern Arabia was the primary supplier of frankincense and myrrh to the Mediterranean, India, and the Persian Gulf.[17] The Hadramawt port of Qani was the chief exporter of these aromatics in the Indian Ocean, while the Arabian port of Muza, mentioned in the *Periplus*, may have supplied the Red Sea networks.[18]

The tumultuous events of the late third century ushered in a new phase of Rome's interactions in the region. The so-called 'third century crisis' led to a gradual decline in the Indo-Romano trade, severing the direct sailing route between the Mediterranean and the Far East and constricting the volume of eastern imports.[19] During the fourth century Myos Hormos declined and was ultimately abandoned.[20] Berenike persisted for a longer period, maintaining its position as Egypt's primary southern hub until at least the sixth century.[21] The rise of Clysma and Aila in the fourth century may reflect the gradual northern retreat of Rome's political influence. Rome's waning control over the India sea route created profitable opportunities for Axumite and Himyarite merchants to control the flow of trade through the Straits of Bab al-Mandab. Late antique literary sources indicate diminishing direct ties between Byzantium and the Far East.[22] Instead, it seems that Roman and Byzantine merchants increasingly came to rely on Ethiopian and South Arabian middlemen for eastern imports.

During the following centuries, the Byzantine, Axumite, and Sasanian empires vied for economic control over the Indian Ocean trade, and presumably access to the

region's resources. An account, preserved in the *Martyrdom of Arethras* (dated 530 CE), demonstrates the heterogeneity of Red Sea trade in the sixth century. It describes an Axumite naval expedition against the Himyarite ruler, Dhu Nuwas, in *c.* 525 CE. The account details the mustering of ships from Aila/Ayla, Clysma/al-Qulzum, Iotabe/Tiran, Berenike, and the Farasan Islands at the Axumite port of Adulis. It has recently been argued that these ships were not part of an organized or coherent fleet, but rather represent the affiliations of the ships that happened to be in the port of Adulis when the Axumite king ordered their seizure.[23] The diverse origins of these ships attest to Adulis' numerous mercantile connections during the first quarter of the sixth century.

Axumite dominance over the southern Red Sea was ultimately relinquished to the Sasanians, whose suzerainty over the Persian Gulf made them the dominant power in the Indian Ocean mercantile sphere. Scholars often attribute Sasanian interest in Arabia to a desire to divert the Indian Ocean trade to the Gulf. Others, however, have suggested that the region's silver resources were an equally important economic motivator for controlling southern Arabia and its ports.[24] Following the Islamic conquest, both the Byzantines and Sassanians lost control of their Red Sea interests.

Given the long history of mercantile activity in the region, as well as the integration of Arabian trading networks into maritime commerce, it is likely that the seventh- and eighth-century caliphs recognized the economic and strategic importance of the Red Sea. To provide a better understanding of maritime activity and trade in the Red Sea following the conquest, the subsequent sections will examine the evidence for ports, resource exploitation, and the shipment of grain and agricultural products during the Umayyad period.

DIRECT CONNECTIONS – GRAIN EXPORT AND PILGRIMAGE ROUTES

Prior to the Islamic conquest, Egypt was the granary of Rome and Byzantium. The subsidized ships that transported grain each year to Rome, and later Constantinople, impacted trading patterns within the Mediterranean. Economic incentives, such as the right to perform duty-free trade on the side, meant that private merchandise piggybacked alongside state shipments. In addition to the opportunities for private gain, the *annona* shipments had a 'gravitational pull' on shipping in the region.[25] The annual movement of these fleets over the same routes established navigational norms, and resulted in the continued use of these seaways by non-*annona* ships.[26] These regular shipping patterns also heightened trading connections between Egypt and Italy, and later Constantinople. Ships that offloaded grain would have filled their hulls with merchandise for the return journey, further establishing mercantile connections between the regions. Other indirect benefits included the influx of capital into the development and maintenance of shipyards, port facilities, and infrastructure that facilitated grain export.

Following the Islamic conquest of Egypt, the grain that had supported the *annona* was redirected to the Hijaz. In 642–3, the Caliph ʿUmar ordered ʿAmr b. al-ʿAs to dredge Trajan's canal to make it navigable between Babylon/Fustat and Clysma/al-Qulzum.[27] ʿAmr seems to have had some knowledge of al-Qulzum and its involvement in trade for he wrote to ʿUmar: 'You know that before Islam, ships used to come

to us carrying traders of the people of Egypt. When we conquered Egypt, that canal was cut, having been blocked off, and the traders had abandoned it.'[28] The reopening of the canal may have initially been in response to a famine that struck Medina in the seventh century. Egypt's continued shipment of grain, olive oil, and other products to the Hijaz was also probably connected to the growing number of pilgrims who were making the annual Hajj to Mecca and Medina.[29]

Cooper demonstrated that the seasonality of the Babylon-Qulzum canal did not correspond with the sailing patterns of the Indian Ocean, suggesting that the canal was geared more towards localized patterns in the Red Sea, rather than the India trade.[30] This conforms with the available evidence from other Red Sea ports at the time, indicating a more regional mercantile sphere during the seventh and eighth centuries.

The impact of grain export on the overall trade patterns of the Red Sea should not be underestimated. The redirection of produce to Arabia not only led to the revitalization of al-Qulzum, but also stimulated the development of new infrastructure within and outside of Egypt. The Aphrodito papyri provide a wealth of information regarding the various expenditures and resources – sailors and marines, skilled craftsmen and laborers, supplies and equipment, provisions and traveling expenses – that were directed to al-Qulzum during the early eighth century as part of the state-sponsored shipment of produce to the Hijaz.[31] The papyri also indicate that an arsenal (*dar al-sinaʿa*) was established at al-Qulzum for the construction and maintenance of river and seagoing ships.[32] Scholars have taken this as evidence for an Umayyad naval presence at the port, which may have escorted the shipment of goods abroad.[33]

Al-Qulzum's development was also tied to pilgrimage due to its strategic position along the primary land route, or *darb al-hajj*, for travelers leaving Egypt for the Hijaz and Holy Land.[34] This route crossed the Sinai and joined the Syro-Palestinian road at Ayla. Pilgrims could take the overland route or pay for passage on a ship. The pilgrimage would have created a demand for foodstuffs and other items, and likely stimulated the local economy in the areas it passed. Although a seasonal phenomenon, the Hajj traffic by land and sea would have impacted regional supply and demand and created profitable opportunities for merchants and shipowners.[35]

Al-Jar and Jeddah, serving Medina and Mecca, were the two primary ports of the Hijaz and their development was closely tied to the import of Egyptian produce and trade goods, as well as the Hajj.[36] This is confirmed by later literary sources, as well as the eighth-century papyri, which mention both ports in relation to Egyptian exports of grain, oil, and textiles.[37] Limited archaeological investigation has been carried out at Jeddah.[38] However, literary traditions dating back to the ninth century indicate that the Caliph ʿUthman designated Jeddah as Mecca's primary port in 647, displacing nearby Shuʿaybah which had filled this role in the pre-Islamic period.[39] Muqqadasi's description of Jeddah as the 'granary of Makka, the entrepot of al-Yaman and Misr', indicates that by the tenth century, the port had developed into an emporium of some importance.[40]

Unlike Jeddah, al-Jar received light survey and excavation in the 1980s. A potential quay was identified in the harbor, and two soundings in the mounded walls of the site identified an early Umayyad through Fatimid ceramic assemblage.[41] More recent investigations by Japanese archaeologists found porcelains and Yue celadons, linking al-Jar to the Indian Ocean trading network.[42]

The development of al-Qulzum, al-Jar, and Jeddah was directly tied to the shipment and redistribution of agricultural produce to the Hijaz, as well as the growing number of Muslim pilgrims making the Hajj. Both phenomena required extensive state investments into developing and securing the maritime and overland routes of the northern Red Sea.[43]

The Aphrodito papyri mention Rhaithu as a destination of items and personnel from al-Qulzum.[44] Rhaithu was a seaport on the southwest coast of the Sinai and may be tentatively attributed to the port of Raya (al-Tur) – the location of a sixth century fortress that was continuously occupied up through the twelfth century.[45] Damgaard identified similarities between Early Islamic Raya and Ayla in both their urban plan, with a centrally located mosque, as well as their ninth- to tenth-century *extra muros* growth.[46] The site's early commercial connections were closely tied to Egypt and Syria-Palestine, as evidenced by the seventh- to eighth-century artifact assemblages from the site.[47] While its role during these early years was also likely related to the shipment of Egyptian products to Arabia, Raya ultimately developed into a thriving commercial port. Archaeological finds from later periods include a rich assemblage of ninth-century glazed wares and Chinese imports, Arabic papyri and ostraca,[48] Abbasid and Fatimid dinars, as well as several inscribed glass weights[49] that attest to Raya's integrated position with the developing Red Sea mercantile sphere. Ibn Khurradadhbih provides a tantalizing glimpse of some of the Red Sea commercial networks that were operating in the mid-ninth century:

> They (Rhadhanites)[50] sail from Firanja on the Western Sea, docking at al-Farama (Pelusium). [From there] they carry their merchandise on their backs to al-Qulzum, between them is twenty-five parasangs. Then they sail on the Eastern Sea from al-Qulzum to al-Jar and Jedda, passing from there to al-Sind, al-Hind (India) and al-Sin (China).[51]

As the *annona* established shipping routes in the Mediterranean, we see that by the ninth century the state-sponsored shipment of grain and the Hajj established set maritime pathways throughout the Red Sea – specifically between al-Qulzum, al-Jar, and Jeddah. These persistent sea lanes would ultimately become the conduits for the India trade, as indicated by Ibn Khurradadhbih's account (*c.* 845 CE).

THE PORT OF AYLA

On the opposite side of the Sinai from al-Qulzum, the port of Aila/Ayla functioned as the primary hub for the southward shipments of products from Palestine. While only a small portion of the *qasr* has been excavated, the results comprise one of the most extensive datasets for the founding and development of an Early Islamic port.[52] A thriving port under the Romans/Byzantines, Aila surrendered by treaty to the Muslims. Traditional accounts record the establishment of the new Muslim settlement, or *misr* (hereafter, Ayla) beside the old city during the reign of ʿUthman.[53] While the site's high water table has made it difficult to reach the earliest levels, excavations and several soundings confirmed an Umayyad date for the site's initial occupation.[54] The ceramics from these early deposits consistently included late Byzantine types, dated to the sixth through seventh centuries, as well as certain new forms that were produced locally (Figure 13.3).[55]

Figure 13.3 Photograph of Umayyad pilgrim flask, jug, and lid. Courtesy of Donald Whitcomb.

Transitional Umayyad types including burnished Late Roman wares, Ayla amphorae disc lids, and oil lamps were identified in a more recent probe in the southwest quadrant of the *qasr*.[56] Significantly, several pieces of carved ivory attest to exchange with East Africa during the site's earliest occupation. Similar ivory objects have also been identified at al-Qulzum, and 1,000 finely carved fragments were discovered at the Abbasid family estate at Humayma, built in 687–8.[57] The ivory from Humayma was likely imported through Ayla. The parallels between the Umayyad and Abbasid assemblages from Ayla and those from al-Qulzum include worked ivory, steatite vessels, and cream-surface storage jars.[58] These items attest to mercantile connections that extended beyond the mere shipment of agriculture products – connections that linked al-Qulzum, Ayla, and the regions of Arabia and East Africa.

The commercial nature of Ayla in the early seventh century is clear from a treaty signed between the Prophet and the bishop of Roman Aila in 630.[59] This agreement, preserved in later chronicles, grants protection to the inhabitants of Ayla, as well as their commercial partners from Syria and Yemen. Critically, the trade that passed through the port via caravan and sea routes was also safeguarded:

> This is a guarantee from God and Muhammad the prophet, the apostle of God, to Yuhanna b. Ruʾba [the bishop of Aila] and the people of Ayla, for their ships and their caravans by land and sea. They and all that are with them, men of Syria, and the Yemen, and seamen, all have the protection of God and the protection of Muhammad the prophet.
>
> It is not permitted that they shall be restrained from going down to their wells or using their roads by land or sea.[60]

This treaty demonstrates both that Ayla was functioning as an important port of trade, and that its new Muslim rulers wanted to ensure that the city continued its role as an economic center. The Roman settlement at Aila continued to prosper under Muslim rule and alongside the newly founded *misr*.[61]

The 'commercial growth that was spurred by the unification, the new prominence of the Hijaz, and the availability of entrepreneurial capital'[62] is evidenced by the artifact

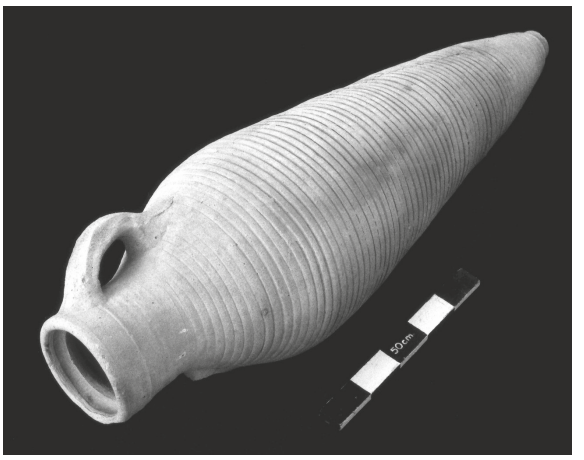

Figure 13.4 Photograph of an Ayla amphora. Courtesy of Donald Whitcomb.

assemblages that have been found throughout the Red Sea Basin. The Ayla amphorae are one of the best indicators for the continued and expanded trade of agricultural products and luxury items such as fruits and nuts.[63] The excavation of a late seventh- to mid-eighth-century kiln complex at Ayla indicates the continued production and range of these amphorae, as well as other ceramic types, following the transition to Islamic rule (Figures 13.4 and 13.5).[64] As with the Ayla treaty, this suggests that mercantile connections were not disrupted by the conquest. Rather, the expanded development of Ayla's hinterland and the wide-ranging distribution of these amphorae are indicators for commercial growth and expansion throughout the Red Sea region. The discovery of Ayla amphorae in Early Islamic contexts at Qani in South Arabia (sixth to seventh century),[65] Adulis,[66] Axum (fifth/sixth to ninth century),[67] and the Black Assarca shipwreck[68] indicate the range of Ayla's commercial network.[69] The Black Assarca shipwreck off Eritrea carried several types of ceramic containers that have direct parallels with those produced in the seventh-/eighth-century kilns at Ayla. These include Ayla amphorae,[70] which seem to have comprised the bulk of the cargo, pilgrim flasks,[71] and a juglet with a trefoil pinched rim.[72] Amphorae lids like those identified in the Ayla kilns were also found across the wreck, with two examples still affixed inside pilgrim flasks.[73] While the shipwreck was initially dated between the fifth to early seventh century, it seems likely, given the parallels between the three vessel types and those that were produced in the Ayla kilns, that the shipwreck should be dated between the late-seventh and mid-eighth century.

While their distribution is generally southwards along the Red Sea, a few examples of Ayla amphorae have been identified in more immediate contexts such as at Elusa (into the eighth century),[74] as well as the Abbasid family estate at Humayma and a farm at Yotvata.[75] The discovery of Ayla amphorae as a portion of the cargo on the early seventh-century shipwreck off Iskandil Burnu, Turkey is the only known place where these amphorae have been documented in a Mediterranean context outside of Palestine.[76] While the Iskandil Burnu shipwreck may represent an anomaly, it does suggest more far-reaching commercial connections in the decades following the Islamic conquest than previously assumed.

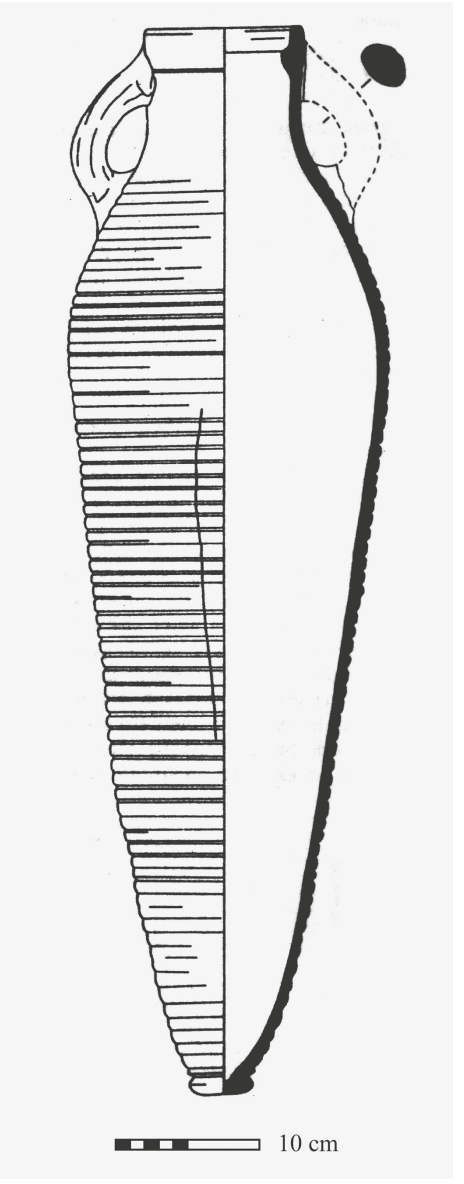

Figure 13.5 Drawing of Ayla amphora. Courtesy of Donald Whitcomb.

MINING AND AGRICULTURE IN AYLA'S HINTERLAND

Ayla's hinterland played a critical role in the development of the port. Mining and agricultural activities expanded during the Umayyad period, creating a surplus of products that could be redistributed throughout the region and redirected to the Hijaz. Surveys and excavations conducted in Ayla's hinterland indicate that the

region's agricultural and mineral resources were heavily exploited during the early eighth and ninth centuries.[77] Copper mining shafts and processing sites were found to the north and west of Ayla, in the Eilat mountains, at Beʾer Ora and within the Sinai and Arabah wadis.[78] Gold dust was extracted and refined at sites in the Wadi Tawahin.[79] Limestone was also locally procured from nearby quarries at Eilat and Nahal Roded and may have provided a ready supply of stone for the construction of Islamic Ayla.[80]

Large-scale agriculture in the form of vast estates and hundreds of small farmsteads have also been documented in the southern Negev and Wadi ʿArabah. The agricultural sites in the Negev Highlands largely show continuous use from the Byzantine period. However, those identified in the ʿArabah Valley were introduced in the late seventh and early eighth century.[81] They are characterized by a different system of irrigation than that used in the Negev. Instead of rainwater collection, large farmsteads of the ʿArabah, like Evrona and Yotvata, drew water directly from aquifers using subterranean tunnels known as *qanat*.[82] The introduction of this technology into the Jordan Valley and the ʿArabah Valley has been linked to the new settlements of the eighth century, including Ayla.[83] Avni describes this process of agricultural intensification as 'a pre-planned government-supported action in order to create an agricultural and industrial hinterland for the newly established Islamic town' at Ayla.[84] He also perceives this enterprise as triggering local processes of sedentarization, whereby economic incentives drove the establishment of new settlements that relied on a combination of pastoralism, small-scale agriculture, and local mining. Both local elites and the state were investing in expanding and establishing agricultural domains, indicating their profitability. The development of Early Islamic Ayla and its rich hinterland had a trickle-down effect that impacted settlement processes and economic development in the northern Red Sea region.

PORTS, AGRICULTURE, AND MINING IN THE HIJAZ

A similar phenomenon of resource development and intensification is evident in the Hijaz by the early eighth century. Although the environment of the northwestern Hijaz did not permit the same extensive agricultural opportunities as the ʿArabah Valley and southern Negev, the wadis surrounding Mecca and Medina were developed with numerous farms and estates, such as the complex at Alwiyah.[85] The Umayyad phenomenon of estates, or *diyaʿ*, should be regarded as a component of this process of agricultural intensification, which likely began in Arabia and spread into the conquered territories. Muʿawiya owned estates like that at Taʾif in the Hijaz,[86] ʿAmr b. al-ʿAs owned several near Ascalon,[87] and an Egyptian papyrus dated to 699–700 mentions a caliphal estate in the Fayyum that was involved in wine production.[88] Private estates like the one near Ayla owned by the hadith scholar, Abu Bakr al-Zuhri (d. 742), represent entrepreneurial investments by the newly enfranchised local elite.[89] The surplus products and revenue from these estates could be traded and further invested in the regional markets of Syria-Palestine and the Red Sea.

Gold and copper mining activities in the Hijaz appear to have been an organized operation under the Umayyads. Several rare gold coins dated to 724 and bearing the legend, 'The mine of the Commander of the Believers in the Hijaz', attest to caliphal mining efforts in the region. The mine referred to on these coins has been tentatively

identified as Mahad Dabab, located southeast of Medina. The mine is thought to have belonged to the Umayyad Caliph ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAziz.[90]

Several mines were concentrated in the Wadi al-Qura, around the towns of Qurh and al-Mabiyyat. Excavations at al-Mabiyyat identified Early Islamic ceramics which have parallels at Ayla, attesting to Ayla's role as a regional node between the southern Negev and northern Arabia.[91] Al-Mabiyyat's substantial defensive elements, including a brick and earthen rampart and a moat, have led scholars to conclude that the site was part of a centralized mining effort in the region.[92]

The mines in Wadi al-Qura were connected to the Red Sea ports of al-Hawra, Awnid, and al-Wajh. These ports have only undergone minimal survey and excavation, so it is difficult to securely date their foundation. Probes conducted at al-Hawra in the 1980s identified steatite, glass, iron slag, and ceramics dated between the seventh and twelfth centuries.[93]

Evidence for Early Islamic steatite mining has been identified at several mines in the Hijaz, two of which appear to have supplied al-Hawra.[94] Occupation and use of these mining sites dates from the seventh through eleventh centuries CE, with one mine possibly in use in the pre-Islamic period.[95] The large quantities of steatite refuse at the port of al-Hawra led investigators to identify it as a potential center for the finishing and export of steatite vessels.[96] The small port of Umm Lajj, just south al-Hawra, seems to have been involved in both the initial processing of local steatite quarried from its hinterland and its transport to al-Hawra for finishing.[97] In addition to the assemblages from Ayla, steatite objects from Early Islamic contexts have been identified at sites in Syria-Palestine, Jordan, Egypt, the Arabian Peninsula, Iran, and East Africa.[98] The wide distribution of these utilitarian objects suggests that the trade in steatite not only continued but expanded during the Umayyad and Abbasid periods.[99]

PORTS AND MINING IN SOUTHERN ARABIA

The south-western Arabian ports may also have been closely connected with mining activities in the Asir Mountains and the Tihama, in addition to their links with the inland settlements at Sanaʿa, Sadah, Jurash, and Zabid.[100] The ports of Aththar, Sharjah, and Ghalafiqa have Islamic traditions associating them with the seventh century, and it is likely that they were occupied in pre-Islamic times. The ports are first mentioned in relation to the local Yemeni ruler, Al-Aswad, who in 632 controlled several coastal towns extending southwards from Aththar to Aden.[101] Archaeological investigations at Aththar identified remains dated between the seventh and late eleventh centuries, including a multiphase mosque with plastered walls and painted motifs, as well as an industrial complex of kilns and glass furnaces.[102] Like at Ayla, this industrial production was likely geared towards the export of hinterland resources around the Red Sea. Archaeological work at Sharjah identified a similar chronology to that at Aththar.[103] It, too, was involved in local ceramic production as well as the collection and possible processing of copper, steatite and alabaster from the nearby Wadi Harar. In contrast, although Ghalafiqa is mentioned in some sources as a seventh-century port, it is most often connected with the establishment of Zabid in the ninth century. Archaeological investigations at the site have turned up largely ninth- to eleventh-century remains, confirming its close ties to Zabid.[104]

Of the three southern Arabian ports described as being founded in the seventh century, archaeological evidence for this early date has been found at two of them. Like the northern Arabian ports, they were associated with mineral extraction areas, and had local industrial complexes to facilitate the export of regional products.

TRADE CONNECTIONS WITH EAST AFRICA

East Africa was a rich source of slaves, gold, ivory, and furs. Trade connections between southern Arabia and southeastern Africa in pre-Islamic times are attested in the *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*.[105] During the Early Islamic Period, the area of modern Eritrea, Ethiopia, and Sudan were controlled by the Axumite and Nubian Kingdoms. Pre-existing trade connections and familiarity with this region likely factored into the early establishment of the ports of Dahlak, Badi, Suakin, and ʿAydhab along the East African coast during the Early Islamic period.

Early traditions, preserved by later chroniclers, demonstrate that there were political and mercantile relations between Arabia and East Africa as early as the days of the Prophet. According to these traditions, the Quraysh commissioned an Ethiopian to rebuild the Kaʿba in 608, using salvaged timber from an Axumite ship that had wrecked in the port of Shuʿaybah.[106] During the sixth century, a clan of the Quraysh known as the Banu Makhzum were active in trade with Yemen and Ethiopia.[107] These ties may have facilitated the early migration of Muslims from Mecca to Ethiopia during the first *hijra* in 615. In one version of this event, a group of Muhammad's followers sailed to Ethiopia to seek the protection of the Axumite Negus (ruler).[108] These *muhajirun* returned to Arabia several years later in 622 and 628. These accounts reveal established maritime connections between Ethiopia and Arabia in the years leading up to the conquest.[109]

The ports of ʿAydhab, Suakin, and Badi served as the primary Red Sea conduits for the flow of mineral and human resources out of East Africa in the ninth and tenth centuries. Because of their associations with Muhammad's immediate successors, ʿAbu Bakr and ʿUmar, ʿAydhab and Badi's origins tend to be placed within a military context of the conquest. Power sees their establishment primarily for providing military bridgeheads, aimed to further the conquest into Nubia.[110] However, the economic incentives for establishing these ports must also be considered.

In addition to the usual economic motivation for conquering an area – in the form of booty, tribute, and taxes[111] – access to the wealth of Nubia and Ethiopia's interiors must have provided a strong impetus for the conquest of these territories. After taking Egypt, Muslim forces pushed southwards into Nubia to gain access to its rich resources.[112] While initial efforts to subdue the area were not successful, the *Baqt* treaty with the Nubian Kingdom of Makuria ensured free trade relations between the two regions, as well as an annual tribute payment of 300 slaves to the Muslim rulers of Egypt. Remains from the Nubian capital at Old Dongola confirm the close economic ties between the Nubian kingdom of Nobadia and Egypt between the seventh and tenth centuries.

Egypt's Eastern Desert mines were exploited in both the Roman and Islamic periods for gold, precious stones, and steatite. While surveys have been conducted in the Eastern Desert, settlement and use patterns within the area are not well-understood for the Early Islamic period.[113] It is unknown if gold mining was conducted in the

area during the Umayyad period, as it was in the regions around Ayla and Wadi al-Qura. The earliest literary account is from Ibn Hawqal who describes the 'rediscovery' of the Byzantine gold-mines in the Wadi al-Allaqi region of Upper Egypt and Sudan following a Muslim raid in the ninth century.[114] This 'rediscovery' resulted in a subsequent gold rush in the ninth and tenth centuries, which led to a rise in the slave trade as increased labor was needed for the mines.

Surveys of Egypt's Eastern Desert between 1997 and 2002 discovered six steatite quarries that were utilized during the Islamic period, indicating that Arabia was not the only source of steatite.[115] Based on the hundreds of roughed-out vessels that were abandoned at the quarries, it seems that cooking wares were the primary form of production. A precise chronology for use of the quarries has not yet been established. However, the presence of certain vessel forms, which are not known from pre-Islamic contexts, suggests that these quarries were a component of the Islamic steatite industry.[116] The quarries are located directly across the Red Sea from al-Hawra. Although it has been suggested that Egyptian steatite may have been shipped to al-Hawra for finishing, it seems possible that there may have been a comparable industry along the Egyptian coast.

Unfortunately, the archaeological exploration of the East African ports has been minimal.[117] The fragmentary evidence dates to later occupations, impeding our understanding of the use and purpose of the early ports. Ibn Sulayman al-Aswani's tenth-century account of the defeated Marwanids may offer insight into the nature of several of these ports in the mid-eighth century. In this account, al-Aswani relates that the Marwanids fled to Nubia through the port of Badi.[118] The account also describes a caravan network that connected Berber, located on the Nile, to the Red Sea ports of Suakin, Badi, and Dahlak. While al-Aswani's account was written several centuries after the reported event, it is plausible that these ports were already developed and closely connected with the Nubian interior and its resources by 750.

The available evidence for the trade in African slaves during the Umayyad period is limited, and yet enough to suggest that it was a profitable enterprise. Slave raids into Lower Nubia were conducted by both the state and private individuals, demonstrating an already strong demand for slaves.[119] The seventh-century *Baqt* treaty established an annual payment of 300 slaves to the Umayyad rulers of Egypt and likely indicates that slaves were one of the factors underlying the initial invasion of Nubia. It is plausible that the caravan route linking Badi, Suakin, and Dahlak to the inland center of Berber facilitated the transshipment of slaves from the Nubian and Ethiopian interiors.[120] Given the long history of the Nubian slave trade, as well as the continued demand for slaves by the early Muslim rulers, it seems possible that ʿAydhab, Suakin, and Badi were involved in the transport of slaves to the Hijaz and elsewhere. Power has established that these ports were the primary nodes in the export of slaves and gold during the ninth and tenth centuries. It is likely that this network had its roots in the seventh and eighth centuries.

While the fate of Axum following the seventh and eighth centuries is not well understood, the discovery of two Axumite copper coins at Ayla illustrates the continued ties between these regions. One of the coins is dated to the seventh or early eighth century and was found in a post-748 earthquake deposit in the seafront market.[121] The discovery of Ayla amphorae at Axum, as well as Umayyad and Abbasid coins at the monastery of Debre Damo in northern Ethiopia, further confirm

the mercantile connections between the Christian and Muslim states during the first centuries of Islam.[122]

Muslim interests extended to the southernmost portions of the Red Sea, the Horn of Africa, and beyond. The *Kitab al-Zunuj* ('Book of the Black Africans'), an anonymous compilation of several sources, includes a section concerned with the pre-Islamic Arab migrations to the Somali coast (and further south) and the founding of several Arab trading centers. The author also details the Islamicization of the area under ʿUmar b. al-Khattab in 642 and the subsequent visits by Umayyad and Abbasid authorities.[123] The nature of these visits, the first of which occurred during the caliphate of ʿAbd al-Malik b. Marwan in 695, was to collect taxes from the coastal towns. These accounts indicate the economic potential of the East African littoral.

While few ports in East Africa have been thoroughly investigated, the available evidence shows a clear Muslim interest in the region. Attempts were made to conquer Nubia, and when that failed, access to the local resources was secured through treaties and by force. Ports were established along the African coast, both as strategic military beachheads, and to provide continued access to the region's rich resources. The Muslim caliphs extended their domain throughout the region and demonstrated their power by extorting taxes and tribute from as far away as Somalia.

CONCLUSION: THE CREATION OF AN ISLAMIC *MARE NOSTRUM*

This chapter has sought to demonstrate that the Red Sea was a dynamic zone of exchange and interaction during the Umayyad period, and not simply an economic backwater. As Alastair Northedge observed nearly two decades ago,

> the role of archaeology in Islam, is to explore the alternative visions of the past that material evidence offers, and to fill out the aspects of that past that authors of the time were unable to see, or thought too familiar to explain.[124]

While there is limited available literary and archaeological material for the Umayyad period, this does not necessarily equate with abandonment or inactivity. A reevaluation of the available evidence suggests that the thriving maritime activity of the Abbasid and Fatimid periods likely had its roots in the first century of Islam.

The term *mare nostrum* was first coined for the Mediterranean to express Rome's political and economic control over the sea and the regions that bordered it. The Mediterranean *mare nostrum* allowed Rome to extract resources from its provinces, control the region's shipping lanes, and tap into commercial networks that were otherwise out of reach.[125] Daryaee recently drew a comparison between the Roman Mediterranean as a *mare nostrum* ('our sea') and the Sasanian Persian Gulf during the third to sixth centuries.[126] Daryaee has argued that the Sasanian expansion into the Persian Gulf beginning in the third century was part of a policy aimed at controlling access to the Indian Ocean trade and exploiting the mineral resources of Arabia, effectively creating a Sasanian *mare nostrum* in the Persian Gulf.[127]

We propose that this model can be applied to the Early Islamic Red Sea. The Muslims' expansion into the Red Sea Basin and its development following the conquest exhibits a similar pattern. The early caliphs appropriated or established ports around the entire Red Sea littoral. While the skeleton of this mercantile network was pre-existing, its overhaul and revitalization was initiated during the first century after the conquest. This infrastructure supported state shipments of agricultural produce and local products to the new political authority in Arabia, and also facilitated the annual influx of pilgrims to the holy cities of Mecca and Medina. Just as the Roman/Byzantine *annona* shipments had an indirect impact on the trading routes of the Mediterranean, the regular shipments of grain, commodities, and pilgrims across the Red Sea likely stimulated commercial activity. These seasonal patterns solidified shipping lanes and fostered new mercantile ties between regions, and likely encouraged entrepreneurial ventures by private individuals and local merchants.

As with the Roman *mare nostrum* in the Mediterranean, the Umayyad maritime network provided access to resources and inland trading routes around the Red Sea. The rapid development of agricultural and mining enterprises in southern Palestine, Arabia, and Egypt suggests that there was a strong regional demand for local products that were distributed through hubs like Ayla and al-Qulzum. Ports along the East African coast, like those of ʿAydhab and Badi, provided access to caravan routes, as well as interior commodities such as slaves, gold, and ivory. These connections likely laid the groundwork for the later gold rush of the ninth and tenth centuries. The Umayyads demonstrated their dominion over the vast Red Sea network through military raids and the collection of taxes. This was true for even distant locations that fell outside the realm of direct control. While tax-collecting missions along the Horn of Africa do not suggest a permanent Muslim political presence, they do indicate a desire to exert influence over the Indian Ocean mercantile sphere.

The Umayyads thus transformed the Red Sea into a *mare nostrum*, a cohesive maritime region over which they held dominance, allowing them to extract resources from around the Red Sea littoral, collect taxes, establish shipping lanes, and tap into dispersed trading networks in East Africa and beyond.

NOTES

1 This is in part a lasting effect of the Pirenne thesis, which advanced a narrative of economic collapse within the Mediterranean following the Germanic and Islamic conquests. We propose that the Pirenne thesis has also impacted the interpretation of archaeological remains in the Red Sea region.
2 For instance, Kennedy 1985, Whitcomb 1995a, Walmsley 2000, Walmsley 2007, Avni 2014.
3 See Kennedy's (1985) response to this debate.
4 Grierson 1960.
5 Walmsley 2000: 270–1.
6 Power 2012 and Damgaard 2011.
7 Power 2009a: 111.
8 Power 2012: 211–12.
9 Damgaard 2011.
10 For the Believer's movement, see Donner 2003 and in this volume.

11 Such as Strabo's *Geography*, Pliny's *Natural History*, and Ptolemy's *Geography*: Nappo 2009: 71. For the *Periplus*, see Casson 1989.
12 Zazzaro 2013: 3–6.
13 Seland 2014: 383.
14 Young 2001: 94–6.
15 Juchniewicz 2017.
16 See Parker 2009: 79–81.
17 For a history of the South Arabian *emporia*, see Schiettecatte 2008.
18 Seland 2014: 376; For Qani, see Sedov 2010; Casson 1989.
19 Mango (1996), Nappo (2009: 71–77), and Christides (2013: 80–106) have reexamined this narrative.
20 For Myos Hormos see Peacock and Blue 2006; Blue 2007; Blue 2002; Whitcomb and Johnson 1979; Whitcomb and Johnson 1982.
21 Nappo 2009, 71; Seland 2014, 38. For a synthesis of Berenike's archaeology, see Sidebotham 2011. Berenike was abandoned by the mid-sixth century.
22 Mayerson (1993: 169–74) discusses the various 'Indias' that appear in the late antique sources and suggests that the toponym referred to Ethiopia and South Arabia, whose merchants were the middlemen of the India trade.
23 Christides 2013: 91–2. Similar instances of state confiscation of merchant ships in harbor are attested in the Islamic period (Khalilieh 1998: 144).
24 Power 2012: 133–4. Specifically, the al-Radrad/al-Jabali mines. Daryaee (2016: 42) suggests that the Sasanians were exploiting Arabian mines in the years leading up to their control of Yemen.
25 McCormick 2001: 90.
26 McCormick 2001: 90–1.
27 Mayerson 1996: 125; Cooper 2009: 197–8. The tradition is reported by Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam (d. 870–1).
28 Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 164–5, cited by Cooper 2009: 198.
29 Trombley 2009: 99.
30 Cooper 2009: 202–6. When the canal was not operational, goods and people could still travel along the overland route between Babylon/Fustat and al-Qulzum.
31 Mayerson 1996: 126; Trombley 2009; Sijpesteijn 2007: 447–8.
32 Fahmy 1966b: 23–7.
33 Mayerson (1996: 126) and Trombley (2009: 103) suggest there is insufficient evidence to judge whether there was a war fleet in the Red Sea at this time.
34 Trombley 2009: 100; Mayerson 1996: 216. For the Syrian and Egyptian Hajj routes, see al-Ghabban 2011.
35 Among the earliest known documentary evidence for the Hajj is a papyrus dated *c.* 705–717 (Sijpesteijn 2014).
36 For the Hajj routes, see al-Ghabban 2011.
37 Al-Baladhuri 1916: 340–41. Al-Baladhuri mentions al-Jar's role in receiving the Egyptian grain and oil exports. See Trombley 2009 for the papyri that mention the shipment of grain.
38 For the results of a coastal survey near Jeddah, see Pedersen 2015.
39 Hawting 1984: 321–2.
40 Al-Muqaddasi 2001: 72.
41 Hamed 1988: 358–78, cited by Damgaard 2011: 170.
42 Damgaard 2011: 170. For a summary of the probes at al-Jar, see Kawatoko 2005.
43 For instance, the arsenal at al-Qulzum. State investment in overland pilgrimage routes under the Abbasids is most evident along the *Darb al-Zubayda* (al-Rashid 1980). A similar

phenomenon may have existed along the Syrian Hajj route, with many of the Umayyad *qusur* functioning as waystations.

44 Bell 1912: 369; Trombley 2009: 103.

45 Kawatoko 2007.

46 Damgaard 2011: 193.

47 For the seventh- and eighth-century material, see Kawatoko's (2007: 19–24) discussions of areas VIII and XXVII, which included transitional Byzantine-Islamic ceramic types, including LRA 5 amphorae. Two *fals* coins were identified – one pre-reform (minted prior to ʿAbd al-Malik's coin reform *c.* 694 CE) and one post-reform.

48 Two fragments of paper or cloth include the names al-Qulzum and al-Ayli, indicating Raya's connectivity with these ports. See Kawatoko 2007: 5, 19.

49 The earliest glass weights belong the late eighth century and are from Egypt, as indicated by their inscriptions.

50 A group of merchants of Jewish origin whose activities are documented by Ibn Khurradadhbih.

51 This translation of Ibn Khurradadhbih appears in Power 2009a: 115.

52 Excavations were conducted between 1986–95 (University of Chicago), 2008–09 (Belgian Islamic Aqaba Project), and 2010 (Danish-American Ayla Archaeological Project).

53 Whitcomb 1995b: 277.

54 Whitcomb 1994a: 8–9; Whitcomb 1994b: 158; Whitcomb 1988: 9–11, 15; Damgaard 2011: 118–20. Parker (2002: 421) identified mid-seventh century material beneath the wall foundations in the northeastern corner of the *misr*.

55 Whitcomb 1994a: 9; Whitcomb 1989: 170–1. For more on Umayyad Ayla ware, see Whitcomb 2001.

56 Damgaard 2011: 118–19.

57 Avni 2014: 230. For al-Qulzum, see Bruyère 1966: pl. 19, cited by Damgaard 2011: 192.

58 For al-Qulzum, see Bruyère 1966. For Ayla, see Melkawi, Amr, and Whitcomb 1994 and Damgaard 2011: 191–2. For an overview of the Early Islamic steatite industry, see Hallett 1990. For a discussion of the steatite objects from the Roman Aqaba Project, see Grubisha 2001.

59 Whitcomb 1994a: 6. According to Damgaard 2011: 126, Ibn Ishaq mentions the treaty in his *Sirat Rasul Allah*, which is an eighth-century text surviving largely in ninth- and tenth-century recensions (Ibn Ishaq 1997).

60 Ibn Hisham's account of the treaty, provided by Power 2012: 106.

61 Ayla's origins are associated with ʿUthman b. ʿAffan (r. 644–56).

62 Melkawi, Amr, and Whitcomb 1994: 463.

63 Raith et al. 2013: 318–48. Ayla amphorae were produced between the fourth and eighth centuries, and possibly into the ninth.

64 Melkawi, Amr, and Whitcomb 1994; Whitcomb 2001.

65 Sedov 1997: 376–7, fig. 12; Sedov 2007: 87, 95–6, cited by Raith et al. 2013: 339. See also Whitcomb 1994a: 24; Whitcomb 2001.

66 Whitcomb 1994a: 24; Raith et al. 2013: 339.

67 Whitcomb 1994a: 24; Whitcomb 2001; Raith et al. 2013: 339.

68 Pederson 2008: 77–94.

69 For a geographic distribution of these amphorae from all historical contexts, see Raith et al. 2013: 339.

70 Pederson 2008: 82–4; for parallels at Ayla, see Melkawi, Amr, and Whitcomb 1994: 456–60, fig. 10.e.

71 Pederson 2008: 84–6; for parallels at Ayla, see Melkawi, Amr, and Whitcomb 1994: 456, fig. 10l.

72 Pederson 2008: 87. Only the neck of one of these juglets was identified; For parallels at Ayla, see Melkawi, Amr, and Whitcomb 1994: 456, fig. 10.b, c.
73 Pederson 2008: 86–7; For parallels at Ayla, see Melkawi, Amr, and Whitcomb 1994: 460.
74 Holmqvist 2010: 142–3. Cited by Raith et al. 2013: 339.
75 For Humayma, see Amr and Schick 2001: 118, fig. 3:1. For Yotvata see Magness 2015: 78, fig. 2.30:1; Avner, Davies, and Magness 2004.
76 Lloyd 1984 initially dated the shipwreck to the sixth/seventh centuries. Tomber 2004: 401 proposes a date in the first half of the seventh century, which seems likely given the presence of Ayla amphorae and other forms.
77 Avner and Magness 1998; Damgaard 2011: 130–3.
78 Avni 2014: 276; Damgaard 2011: 131–2.
79 Avner and Magness 1998: 44–5.
80 Avner and Magness 1998: 45; Damgaard 2011: 131. Damgaard notes that the finds from these sites correspond to assemblages from Ayla.
81 Avni 2014: 274–5.
82 Avner and Magness 1998: 46–7.
83 Avni 2014: 275.
84 Avni 2014: 280.
85 Although thought to date to the Abbasid period, Alwiyah provides an example of an Early Islamic rural estate. The site features dams, aqueducts, and a reservoir for diverting and managing water.
86 A Kufic inscription states that Muʿawiya ordered its construction in 677–8: Trombley 2009: 105.
87 Avni 2014: 245.
88 Sijpesteijn 2007: 450–1.
89 Cobb 1995: 427.
90 Miles 1950: 20–1, pl. IV.66. Mining is still conducted at Mahad Dabah by the Saudi Arabian Mining Company.
91 Damgaard 2011: 154–5.
92 Damgaard 2011: 156; Kisnawi, de Jesus, and Rihani (1983: 77) suggest that the gold mining settlements around Umm Qarayyat, east of al-Wajh, were also organized under a central authority.
93 Ali Hamed 1988, cited by Damgaard 2011: 174.
94 Kisnawi, de Jesus, and Rihani 1983: 78–9; citing Hallet 1990, Grubisha 2001: 14 identifies the mines in al-Hawra's vicinity as Jabal Khubab and Jabal Huray'im Musamiyan.
95 Hallett 1990: 9–10, cited by Grubisha 2001: 15.
96 Kisnawi, de Jesus, and Rihani 1983: 78–9.
97 Kisnawi, de Jesus, and Rihani 1983: 78–9; Damgaard 2011: 160.
98 Grubisha 2001: 15–18, 32–3; Herriot 2017: 172–3; Hallett 1990.
99 Grubisha 2001: 34, 147.
100 Al-Thenayian 2008 presents a summary of the ceramic assemblages collected during a survey of five sites along the Tihami coast, including Aththar and Sharjah.
101 Zarins and Zahrani 1985: 69.
102 Zarins and Zahrani 1985. Damgaard (2011: 214–15) draws a parallel between the painted motifs in Aththar's mosque and those in the mosques at Rabadhah and Raya, and the Pavilion building at Ayla.
103 Damgaard 2011: 216–17.
104 Keall 2008. The Canadian Archaeological Mission of the Royal Ontario Museum (CAMROM) also documented an early open-air mosque near the modern village of

Ghulayfiqa, one kilometer south of the ninth to eleventh century deposits. It is possible that the remains of the earlier port are beneath the modern village.

105 Tibi 1996: 237–8.

106 Hawting (1984: 318–19) describes the various versions of this account, as well as other traditions that tie Shuʿaybah and Jeddah with Ethiopia; Fahmy 1966a: 62.

107 Tibi 1996: 239.

108 Fahmy 1966a: 62–3; Hawting 1984: 319.

109 Fahmy 1966a: 63.

110 Power 2012: 94.

111 The *Kitab al-Zunuj*'s accounts of the tax collecting missions along the Somali coast carried out under ʿAbd al-Malik and then under Abbasid caliphs, attest to the profitability of controlling the southeast African coastal settlements. It is likely that a similar pattern of taxation and tribute was conducted in the Nubian and Ethiopian littorals. See Tibi 1996: 240–1.

112 See Sijpesteijn 2007 for a history of the conquest of Egypt and its impact. For a discussion of the military engagements and raids into the Nubia, see Power 2012: 135–42.

113 Damgaard (2011: 182–3) attributes this to problems with reporting and analysis, as well as preconceived notions of decline in the area following the rise of Islam.

114 Power 2012: 138–9.

115 Harrell and Brown 2008.

116 Harrell and Brown 2008: 58.

117 For ʿAydhab, see *EI3*, 'Aydhab' (D. Whitcomb); for Badi, see Crowfoot 1911; Hebbert 1935; Kawatoko 1993a; 1993b; for Suakin, see Crowfoot 1911; Greenlaw 1976; Smith et al. 2012; Mallinson 2012.

118 Power 2012: 141.

119 See Power's (2012: 141–3) discussion on the early trade in slaves.

120 Power 2009b.

121 Whitcomb 1994a: 16–18. The second Axumite coin is an anonymous issue of the early Christian period and dated to the late fourth or early fifth centuries. Similar coins have been found in Palestine.

122 Munro-Hay 2002: 336–7, cited by Damgaard 2011: 225, footnote 960; Zarins and Zahrani 1985: 89.

123 Tibi 1996: 241.

124 Northedge 1999: 789.

125 Daryaee 2016: 40.

126 Daryaee 2016.

127 Daryaee 2016: 44.

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CHAPTER FOURTEEN

THE UMAYYADS AND NORTH AFRICA
Imperial rule and frontier society

Corisande Fenwick

INTRODUCTION

The history of Umayyad North Africa is seldom told. Arabian armies first entered North Africa in 642 but, unlike the swift conquest of the Middle East, these early raids did not result in Muslim rule. Instead, the laconic Arabic accounts describe devastating defeats, widespread revolts and hasty retreats to the safety of Egypt that took place over many decades.[1] North Africa's eventual conquest in the 690s, during the reign of ʿAbd al-Malik, was a significant Umayyad achievement that almost doubled the size of the Caliphate. Caliphal rule proved to be short-lived, however. In 739–40, the so-called 'Kharijite revolt' broke out in distant Morocco, rapidly spread to Spain and Tunisia and in its wake new embryonic Muslim states emerged across North Africa as rivals to the Caliphate. The Abbasids briefly regained control of parts of Ifriqiya in 761–2, but within a few decades, it was clear that the imperial experiment had failed and in 800 they abandoned the region to their vassals, the Aghlabids.

This complicated history explains why North Africa has so often been neglected by standard accounts of the early Caliphate: it does not fit with the neat narrative of a rapid conquest followed by Umayyad and Abbasid rule that is so often told for the central and eastern lands of the Caliphate. Conquered far later than these regions – and after ʿAbd al-Malik's reforms – North Africa presents a view of how the Umayyad Caliphate established imperial rule on its frontiers as a mature empire, rather than a conquest state, and how its agents interacted with local communities. There are other differences too: North Africa was a frontier province and one of the most densely militarised regions of the Caliphate. Some of its peoples, the Berbers, converted to Islam *en masse* and joined the Muslim armies in the conquest of North Africa and al-Andalus, an act unparalleled elsewhere.[2] It is precisely these differences that make North Africa an illuminating place to interrogate how Umayyad rule worked on the ground.

Before proceeding, however, we must confront the problems with the evidence, some of which are peculiar to this region. North Africa is rarely mentioned in the main sources for the Umayyad period, and for good reason. By the time that the earliest surviving conquest histories were compiled in the late ninth century, the region had already been lost to the Caliphate for many decades. Accordingly, North Africa is dealt with only briefly by historians of the Egyptian and Iraqi schools such as Ibn ʿAbd

al-Hakam (d. 871), al-Baladhuri (d. *c.* 892) and al-Tabari (d. 923) writing with the privilege of hindsight about the long, expensive and ultimately unsuccessful attempt to impose caliphal rule on the Maghrib. Some gaps in our knowledge can be filled in by the detailed, but generally reliable, accounts of much later Western historians such as the Andalusi scholar Ibn ʿIdhari (d. after 1310) and the North African scholar Ibn Khaldun (d. 1406) and the Ibadi sources written in the ninth-to-fourteenth centuries CE, but the task is made harder by a lack of recent scholarship on early Islamic North Africa: the Tunisian historian Hichem Djait's articles in the late 1960s remain the best and only dedicated analysis of the Umayyad and Abbasid century.[3]

Archaeology poses a different set of challenges for the Umayyad period. French colonial rule in Algeria (1830–1962), Tunisia (1881–1956), and Morocco (1912–56), and Italian colonial rule in Libya (1911–43) made Roman archaeology the research priority.[4] Not only were very few Islamic sites excavated, but archaeologists rarely recorded medieval layers in their efforts to expose the monumental architecture and richly decorated housing of the early Roman period.[5] Even today, the Islamic archaeology of North Africa is still in its infancy in comparison to the Middle East: we know nothing archaeologically about the Umayyad foundations of Kairouan or Tunis or indeed those towns that were the most significant in the Umayyad period (e.g. Béja, Sousse, Tubna, Gafsa, Tlemcen, Tangiers).[6] More troubling still, archaeologists have not yet constructed a secure ceramic chronology for the early medieval period, and as a result, the eighth century remains a hidden century.[7] Understanding Umayyad rule in North Africa, then, is a challenging task. The historical sources are very late and provide few details, while the archaeological evidence is slim and difficult to interpret.

THE MUSLIM CONQUEST OF NORTH AFRICA

When the Prophet Muhammad died in 632, Byzantine rule was confined to the North African coast and the fertile plains of the Tunisian Tell and Sahel. The provinces of Byzantine Africa were still densely urbanised, with a substantial export economy of olive oil, grain, textiles and ceramics, a taxation system and similar administrative structures to the Byzantine provinces in Egypt and Syria-Palestine conquered by the Arabians. As in Egypt and Syria-Palestine, the population had become largely Christian (with small but important Jewish communities throughout) by the fifth or sixth century. There are, however, significant but often overlooked differences between the African provinces and the other Byzantine provinces that the Arabians conquered: in Africa, the population spoke and inscribed in Latin, not Greek, and they looked towards the Papacy in Rome for religious authority more than to Constantinople. An even more significant difference, perhaps, was the absence of Arabian auxiliary troops serving in the Byzantine army in Africa prior to the conquest. Thus, while Byzantine Africa and its administration would have been familiar to the conquerors, in other important ways, the region and its Latin-speaking inhabitants may have seemed rather alien.

Beyond Byzantine Africa, the differences were even more striking. The Mauretanias, pre-desert and Saharan regions were peopled by different groups, both settled and mobile, some Christian or Jewish or pagan, some recognising the nominal authority of the Byzantines, others in small rival statelets.[8] The Arabs called these people

al-barbar, distinguishing them from the *afariq*, the Latin-speaking town-dwellers of Byzantine Africa.[9] These regions were significantly less densely settled, and were dependent primarily upon pastoral and subsistence farming; it is unclear whether there was any form of taxation or even a monetary economy. These differences between the Byzantine core and the Berber borderlands proved to be vital for the Caliphate.

Muslim armies led by ʿAmr b. al-ʿAs first entered Byzantine Africa from Egypt on a raiding expedition against the cities of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica in 642, after their successful seizure of Alexandria.[10] Decades of intermittent seasonal raiding against the rich cities of Byzantine Tripolitania and central Tunisia as well as the Saharan oases of Libya followed. The most significant raid was that commanded by ʿAbd Allah b. Abi Sarh in 647 which defeated the army of the Byzantine renegade exarch Gregory near Sufetula/Sbeitla in central Tunisia and seized an immense booty of gold and many slaves. ʿAbd Allah did not push his military advantage with the death of Gregory, but instead agreed to leave Africa in exchange for a huge sum of gold and an annual payment of 330,000 gold *solidi* from the town-dwellers.[11]

It was only after the Umayyad Muʿawiya (r. 661–80) seized the Caliphate that raiding turned to a systematic attempt to capture Byzantine and Berber Africa. The reasons for this change in tactic are unclear: some accounts mention North African notables petitioning the caliph for his aid against the rapacious Byzantine tax-collectors, however, there are signs that this was part of a broader strategy of Umayyad imperial expansion.[12] Muʿawiya resumed the military offensive on all fronts, attacking not only Byzantine-held Africa, but also Byzantine Constantinople and the Mediterranean islands and the far eastern frontier in Khurasan.[13] New garrison cities were built on all these fronts and so too in Ifriqiya. Muʿawiya entrusted the conquest of Ifriqiya to ʿUqba b. Nafiʿ, the nephew of ʿAmr b. al-ʿAs who had led the earliest raiding expeditions into the Sahara in the 640s. ʿUqba made his way slowly west: in 666–7, he travelled into the Libyan Sahara and re-established the tribute agreements he had made with the 'kings of the Fazzan' some 20 years earlier; in 670, he founded the *misr* of Kairouan in central Tunisia, before proceeding westwards all the way to the Atlantic. He was killed on his return, near the Algerian oasis of Biskra in 683 where a shrine now commemorates his burial place. Again, ʿUqba's expedition did not result in permanent rule or the subjugation of Africa: Carthage was never captured, and his new city of Kairouan was abandoned in the civil wars (the Second Fitna) of the 680s when the Arab soldiers retreated to their strongholds in Tripoli and Barca.

Once the caliph ʿAbd al-Malik had restored Umayyad authority in the East, he entrusted Hassan b. al-Nuʿman with the task of conquering North Africa. ʿAbd al-Malik had direct knowledge of the region as he himself had campaigned there in the 660s as part of the highly successful raid against Djalloula (ancient Cululis), an important fortified Byzantine town.[14] He even had his own Berber *mawali* cavalry regiment, the Waddahiya, named after its commander Waddah, his Berber freedman (presumably a spoil of the 660s raids).[15] It may be that this personal knowledge of the region and its riches was one of the reasons why he was prepared to invest considerable military resources in subduing North Africa. Ibn ʿIdhari tells us that Hassan b. al-Nuʿman brought 40,000 men from Egypt, a huge number, which as he points out was the largest army that the Muslims had ever dispatched to Africa.[16] Hassan

made agreements with some Berber groups and took 12,000 men into his army. Sheer numbers won through. In 697–8, Hassan captured the Byzantine capital Carthage, after he cut the aqueduct and water supply. Carthage's Byzantine (Greek-speaking) inhabitants sailed away; the city was subsequently sacked, its walls destroyed and the harbour filled in.[17] Within a few years, Umayyad armies made up of Arab soldiers and Berber auxiliary troops and led by the new governor Musa b. Nusayr extended their control over the Berber peoples of the central and western Maghrib.[18] The conquest chronicles and later judiciary texts make clear that the Berbers made their *islam*, or submission, as pagans rather than People of the Book. Accordingly, in name, they were regarded as Muslim and supposed to pay the alms (*sadaqat*) of believers.[19] Musa took large numbers of fighting men as hostages (*rahaʾin*) and incorporated them into the army. Much of this Berber army participated in the conquest of al-Andalus of 711, which itself became a fourth province ruled by a sub-governor under the authority of the governor in Kairouan.[20]

The lengthy conquest of North Africa was once seen as catastrophic for civic life, urbanism and trade, but archaeologists have demonstrated that this perspective is as exaggerated for North Africa as it is elsewhere in the early Muslim world.[21] With the exception of the capital Carthage and perhaps Thuni (later to become Tunis) that were stormed and sacked, almost all of the towns surrendered and seem to either have been left undamaged or recovered swiftly.[22] Outside Carthage, excavations have found few traces of fire, building collapse or sudden abandonment that date to the second half of the seventh century.[23] Of course, the absence of destruction layers reflecting physical events such as fire, demolition or abandonment in much of Tunisia and Libya does not mean that the long conquest phase was not disruptive. A significant drop in the circulation of archaeologically visible goods in the latter half of the seventh century and the eighth century, such as ceramics, reflects an increasing regionalisation and the disruption of long-held commercial networks that must be related to the insecurity of North Africa from the 660s onwards.[24]

GOVERNING IFRIQIYA

The scale of the Umayyad achievement in Africa is astounding. In theory at least, Hassan and Musa's conquests created a new province that encompassed over five times the territory of Byzantine Africa and over twice that of Roman Africa at its peak. It stretched from Atlantic Morocco to the Western Desert of Egypt and from the shores of the Mediterranean to the oases of the deep Sahara in the South. Understanding the nature of Umayyad rule and its after-effects across such an immense region poses substantial challenges to the historian. It also posed substantial challenges to the Umayyads and their governors. The Caliphate could not simply rule North Africa as the Romans, Vandals or Byzantines had; they had to connect together vastly different regions and peoples that had never in their history been united under one power – and never would be again.

By this stage, however, the Caliphate was no longer a conquest state but an established empire with a military, fiscal system, legal system and provincial bureaucracy.[25] A model for new city foundations (*amsar*, sing. *misr*) to house Muslim troops had been established at Basra (636), Kufa (639) and Fustat (641) during the

conquests, comprising a set pattern of mosque, *dar al-imara* (government residence) and tribal quarters.[26] ʿAbd al-Malik's reforms in the 690s had created a professional army, a standardised currency and weight system, and a centralised, Arabic-speaking administrative system. At the same time, a new visual rhetoric of Islamic power and culture had also developed in the Middle East, abundantly evident in new city and palatial foundations, the introduction of new architectural forms such as congregational mosques, the use of Arabic as the epigraphic language of display and the introduction of an aniconic coinage.[27] In principle, then, a standard tool-kit of caliphal administration and Islamic culture existed which could be imported to newly conquered provinces like North Africa.

North Africa, however, posed problems for the Umayyads. Its sheer size necessitated significant administrative changes both for the Caliphate and for the region. Governed from Egypt during the conquest period, Ifriqiya was made a separate *wilaya* (province) in around 705 on the request of Musa b. Nusayr. The new *wilaya* was divided into Ifriqiya proper (the old Byzantine provinces of Proconsularis and Byzacena), Tripolitania, the Zab (Numidia), Near Sus and Far Sus. These regions were governed by *ʿamil*s (sub-governors), and were further subdivided into districts (*kura*s) and cantons (*rustaq*s), each with their own commander.[28] These subdivisions provide some insight into the level of control that the Umayyads held over the different regions: Ifriqiya was subdivided into many *kura*s, each with their own centre, but Near and Far Sus only had district capitals which seems to have served as bases for slaving expeditions: Tangiers and the as-yet unlocated Tarqala.

Following the model of the eastern provinces, the Maghrib was governed by a *wali* (governor), appointed by the caliph in Damascus (Table 14.1). During the long conquest period when Ifriqiya was ruled from Fustat, the earliest governors were members of the Arabian military aristocracy of Egypt with close connections to individual caliphs – a factor which contributed to the rapid turnover of governors in line with new successions. Subsequently, there was a tendency for command to be given in North Africa to *mawali* (clients and freedman) of the Egyptian governors, no doubt because of their crucial importance in maintaining regional stability through their loyalty and – of course – ensuring that the Egyptian *wali* received his share of the booty.[29] In turn, the governors of Ifriqiya usually appointed their own clients and freedman to al-Andalus. Relations between Egypt and Ifriqiya remained strong even after the division of the provinces and there was a high degree of exchange between the two regions, particularly in terms of administrative personnel and members of the leading families. Indeed, many of the later governors of Ifriqiya had already served as governor of Egypt.[30] Governorship was a high-stake game as elsewhere in the Caliphate: governors and their underlings were often jailed, tortured and had their property seized by their successors when their appointment ended.[31] Despite these risks, Ifriqiya was seen as a plum provincial appointment with rich pickings in slaves and booty for the incumbents and their supporters.

The new city of Kairouan, the *misr* established by ʿUqba b. Nafiʿ, served as the capital of the vast new province, displacing Carthage, the port-city that had served as capital for over 1,000 years. Tunis was built to replace it as the main harbour and district capital in the north. As we shall see, these new Muslim foundations would have looked very different from the existing North African towns and their construction altered the regional urban infrastructure in key ways. For the most part, however,

Table 14.1 Caliphs and governors of Ifriqiya.

Caliph	*Governor*
Muʿawiyah I (661–680)	Muʿawiya b. Hudayj al-Kindi (665–6)
	ʿUqba b. Nafiʿ al-Fihri (666–74)
	Abu al-Muhajir Dinar (674–81)
Yazid I (680–3)	ʿUqba b. Nafiʿ al-Fihri (681–3)
Muʿawiyah II (683–4)	Zuhayr b. Qais al-Balawi (683–9)
Marwan I (684–5)	
ʿAbd al-Malik b. Marwan (685–705)	Hassan b. al-Nuʿman al-Ghassani (692–703)
Al-Walid I (705–15)	Musa b. Nusayr al-Lakhmi (703–15)
Sulayman b. ʿAbd al-Malik (715–17)	Muhammad b. Yazid (715–18)
ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAziz (717–20)	Ismaʿil b. ʿAbd Allah b. Abi al-Muhajir (718–20)
Yazid II (720–4)	Yazid b. Abi Muslim (720–1)
	Muhammad b. Yazid (721)
	Bishr b. Safwan al-Kalbi (721–7)
Hisham b. ʿAbd al-Malik (724–43)	ʿUbayda b. ʿAbd al-Rahman al-Sulami (727–32)
	ʿUqba b. Qudama (732–4)
	ʿUbayd Allah b. al-Habhab al-Mawsili (734–41)
	Kulthum b. ʿIyad al-Qasi (741)
	Balj b. Bishr al-Qushayri (741–2)*
Al-Walid II (743–4)	Handhala b. Safwan al-Kalbi (742–4)
Yazid III (744)	
Ibrahim al-Walid (744)	
Marwan II (744–50)	ʿAbd al-Rahman b. Habib al-Fihri (745–55)
Al-Saffah (750–4)	Ilyas b. Habib al-Fihri (755)
Al-Mansur (754–75)	Habib b. Abd al-Rahman al-Fihri (755–7)
	Kharijite rebellion and capture
	Muhammad b. al-Ashʿath al-Khuzaʿi (762–5)
	ʿIsa b. Yusuf al-Khurasani (765)
	al-Aghlab b. Salim al-Tamimi (765–6)
	al-Hassan b. Harb al-Kindi (766–7)
	Al-Mikhariq b. Ghuffar (767–8)
	ʿUmar b. Hafs al-Muhallabi (768–71)
	Habib b. Habib al-Muhallabi (771)
	ʿUmar b. Hafs al-Muhallabi (771)
	Yazid b. Hatim al-Muhallabi (772–87)
Al-Mahdi (775–85)	
Al-Hadi (785–6)	

Table 14.1 Cont.

Caliph	*Governor*
Harun al-Rashid (786–809)	Rawh b. Hatim al-Muhallabi (787–91) Nasr b. Habib al-Muhallabi (791–3) al-Fadl b. Rawh b. Hatim al-Muhallabi (793–5) Harthama b. Aʿyan (795–7) Muhammad b. Muqatil al-Akki (797–9) Tammam b. Tamim al-Tamimi (799–800) Muhammad b. Muqatil al-Akki (800)

*Abd al-Rahman b. Uqba al-Ghaffari seized power in Kairouan.

the Umayyad authorities found the existing administrative and military network adequate to their needs. The district capitals of Ifriqiya, such as Baja (Vaga/Béja) in northern Tunisia, Susa (Hadrumetum/Sousse) on the Sahel coast, Kafsa (Capsa/Gafsa) in the pre-desert and Tanja (Tingis/Tangier) in the far West, had all been regional capitals and military centres under the Byzantines (Figure 14.1).[32]

Taxation was imposed as soon as Carthage fell. Hassan b. al-Nuʿman instituted the *diwan* and imposed the *kharaj* on the town-dwellers of Ifriqiya and all those Berbers who continued to profess Christianity.[33] While taxation was probably imposed unevenly at a local level, coins were minted immediately in 698, presumably to pay the army still on campaign. Minted after ʿAbd al-Malik's coinage reforms, they do not follow the same norms as the rest of the empire for several decades.[34] Initially, gold dinars were minted with the same globular fabric and weight standards as the African Byzantine solidus and showed imperial busts and Latin translations of the Muslim profession of faith, though the Christian cross on the reverse was usually modified by removing its horizontal bar. Latin statements of the *shahada* start to appear on coins from 707 (a phenomenon unparalleled in other regions of the Islamic world); the Byzantine dating system was used until 713; bilingual Arabic-Latin inscriptions appear in 716 when images also disappear and silver dirhams are minted for the first time, suggesting a shift to the bi-metallic monetary system. In 718–9, Latin inscriptions and dates were finally replaced by Arabic but the diameter, weight, gold content and legends continued to be slightly different to dinars minted elsewhere in the Caliphate (the same is true for al-Andalus). North African coinage only became uniform with the currency circulated in the remainder of the empire in 732–3, 37 years after the introduction of post-reform coinage in the central Islamic lands.[35] The slow transformation of the coinage is revealing: it reflects not only the difficulties of imposing new administrative and economic systems in a newly conquered province, but also the importance that the Umayyad rulers and their governors placed on ensuring a functioning economy and marketplace through the continuity of the Byzantine coinage standard from the outset. It also may shed some light on the chronology of linguistic Arabisation of the administration in Ifriqiya, who were primarily drawn from the existing North African bureaucratic classes as in other provinces.

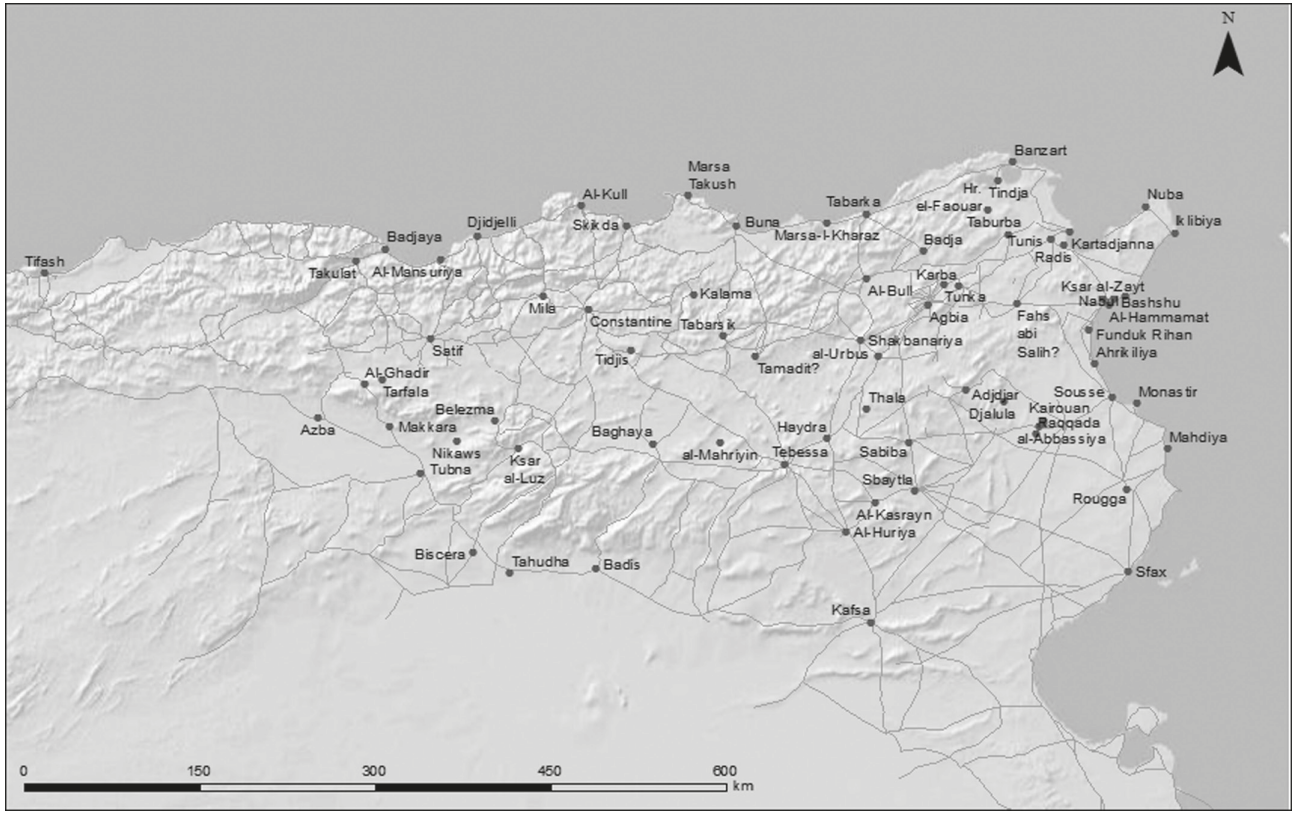

Figure 14.1 Early Medieval Towns in Ifriqiya (copyright Corisande Fenwick).

A FRONTIER PROVINCE: THE ROLE OF THE MILITARY

The Umayyads were only able to control such a vast territory by military force. According to the fourteenth-century historian Ibn ʿIdhari – a generally reliable source – the numbers were small in the seventh and early eighth centuries, perhaps 50,000 men from different tribes on the Arabian Peninsula who had first served in Egypt.[36] It is unclear how many of these men settled in Africa, but those that did became a small hereditary ruling class composed primarily of the conquerors and their descendants with very few outsiders. Land grants were given to some of these soldiers creating a landed Arab aristocracy with extensive landholdings, cultivated in many cases by slaves from sub-Saharan Africa.[37] The Fihrids, who were the descendants of ʿUqba b. Nafiʿ, came to occupy a particularly privileged place in Ifriqiyan and Andalusi society, in part due to the huge social capital amassed by ʿUqba and his family during the conquest, but also because of his large client network and the estates that they had acquired.[38] Members of different branches of the Fihrid family played prominent roles in the military and governance of Ifriqiya and al-Andalus. One of them, as we shall see, even sought to found his own dynasty in the troubles of the 740s. There were other powerful Arab settlers who appear briefly in the sources – those of Qurashi ancestry were particularly powerful.[39]

This urban-based Arab military aristocracy constituted one of the most significant minority groups in the region, with its own tight-knit communities and articulated ideas of what it meant to be a member of the ruling class. The frequent revolts and rebellions warn us against imagining that these different groups of soldiers acted as a monolithic instrument of state power. Nonetheless, as we shall see, the very act of conquest and relocation into a foreign land seems to have united these men from different places and tribes into a discrete community that distinguished themselves both from their Berber allies and fellow soldiers and from soldiers sent from elsewhere in the Caliphate.

To the Arab soldiers who came and garrisoned the new province, we must add the Berber soldiers who participated in the Umayyad conquest of North Africa and al-Andalus.[40] Of these, the most famous is Tariq b. Ziyad, the conqueror of Spain and *mawla* of Musa b. Nusayr. Many of the Berbers who accompanied Tariq settled in al-Andalus and did not return to Africa. Others were given land in Ifriqiya and settled in Kairouan. From the start, Berbers often made up the guard of the *wali*, others served in the ranks of the army of Ifriqiya (*jaysh ifriqiya*) in the attack against Constantinople in 717.[41] The legendary account of the Kahina ('the sorceress') and leader of the Jarawa tribe, as recounted by Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam, shows how members of local aristocracy or tribal leaders were integrated into the Umayyad army. After fighting the army of Hassan b. al-Nuʿman, she foresees her death and defeat and so entrusts her sons to Hassan, who fulfils the prophecy by killing her, but also by giving her two sons military command. The two sons submit to Hassan with their followers, convert to Islam, and are rewarded with command of the Berber troops within the conquest armies.[42] It was not only the Berbers who joined the Arab armies. Members of the Christian population also joined in the conquest as allies, such as ʿAbd al-Rahman al-Hubuli, a Christian Romano-African who converted to Islam and

participated in the conquest of Spain and then returned to Kairouan where he built a mosque before his death in 719.[43]

The question of conversion to Islam is contested, but it was theoretically required for entry into the army. Musa b. Nusayr is said to have provided Arab missionaries to instruct Berber troops in Islam as early as 708.[44] However, a levy of slaves was imposed upon these Berber tribes who converted, a phenomenon that is unparalleled elsewhere in the Islamic world.[45] Changes to the status of *mawali* occurred under ʿUmar II (r. 717–20), with important consequences for North Africa with its large numbers of Berber *mawali* – perhaps the most of any province. Musa decided that all Muslim subjects should be treated equally, abolishing the *jizya* from non-Arab Muslims and, perhaps most importantly, stated that *mawali* who fought in the Arab armies were to be paid stipends on the same scale as the Arabs.[46] Prior to this, they had only received no pay for their efforts other than a right to share in the booty. Pay was a major source of contention across the entire Caliphate, but particularly in Africa, Transoxiana and Khurasan, frontier regions with large numbers of converted auxiliary troops.[47] At the same time, ʿUmar encouraged further missionisation and the Berbers are alleged to have embraced Islam through the efforts of Ismaʿil b. ʿAbd Allah b. Abi al-Muhajir, the *mawla* of the governor of North Africa in 718–20.[48]

It is in light of these concessions to *mawali* serving in the army and a second-wave of mass conversion to Islam that we should situate the revolt of 720. The caliph Yazid II appointed a new governor, Ibn Abi Muslim, who decided to humiliate his Berber guard in Kairouan by having their hands tattooed with their names on their right hand and the phrase 'Guard of Yazid' on their left, a custom that was used for slaves. They rose up, killed him and temporarily forced the caliph to accept their choice of successor (an earlier governor, Muhammad b. Yazid).[49] This is the first indication that we have of significant tensions between Berber soldiers and the Arab ruling elite, and of the perception of Berber Africa as a source of slaves for the Caliphate. Tensions grew and no serious campaigning took place in the interior for many years. Instead, the governors sent out annual slaving raids into the Mediterranean against Byzantine-held Sicily, Sardinia and Corsica.[50] Captives (primarily women and children) were taken in large numbers and sent as tribute to the East. The named commanders of the various expeditions are predominantly of Arab – rather than Berber – origin and seem to be taken from the Ifriqiyan Arab elite; the Fihrids play a particularly prominent role.

The appointment of ʿUbayd Allah to the governorship in 734 brought these tensions to a tipping point. He had previously served as a highly successful, if hated, *amir* of Egypt, where he initiated land surveys and censuses, reorganised the diwan, and imposed new taxes on Muslims, as well as investing in and improving infrastructure and encouraging conversion to Islam.[51] It seems likely he did the same in North Africa. Certainly, increasing provincial revenue was a key objective: he immediately dispatched expeditions to Sicily, and to al-Sus (southern Morocco) and the 'Land of the Black People' (West Africa) – both under Fihrid commanders.[52] These acquired large amounts of booty and slaves and, theoretically at least, brought southern Morocco under the rule of the Caliphate. At the same time, he reinstated *dhimmi* taxation (the *jizya* and *kharaj*) and slave-tributes

on the Muslim Berber population (particularly zealously enforced by the governor of Tangiers, ʿUmar b. ʿAbd Allah al-Muradi), provoking immense opposition across the region.

The Berber soldiers resented the dominance of the Arab aristocracy and sent ten chieftains to complain to the caliph Hisham because the Arabs discriminated against them in the distribution of booty, forced them to serve at the front in the battle while the Arabs stayed at the back, and were seizing their livestock for the skins of unborn lambs, and enslaving their daughters.[53] The caliph would not receive them and so a rebellion, the 'Kharijite revolt', was started in 739–40 in western Morocco by Maysara al-Madghari, allegedly one of the delegation to Hisham. It rapidly spread across North Africa.[54] The revolt did not arise solely in Berber elements of the army, it also sprang from the unhappiness of rural and urban populations about the reinstatement of the *jizya* as well as a general discontent amongst Berber groups about the multiple fiscal demands being placed upon them. But it was certainly originally roused by Berber soldiers and then led by them.

The army sent by the governor ʿUbayd Allah and led by a Fihrid to suppress this revolt was wiped out at what came to be known as the 'Battle of the Nobles' (*ghazwat al-ashraf*) because of the large number of Ifriqiyan aristocrats who died on the field.[55] As one revolt followed another in North Africa and al-Andalus, Hisham was forced to send massive expeditionary forces from Syria to North Africa to deal with the situation, few of whom returned. In 741, he dispatched Kulthum b. ʿIyad with 30,000 men raised from the *jund*s of the East (Damascus, Jordan, Qinnasrin, Hims, Palestine and Egypt) to quell the Berber revolt and govern the province. The relations between the Ifriqiyan Arab aristocracy and the Syrian army were strained from the outset.[56] Kulthum's nephew Balj b. Bishr, who commanded the Syrian cavalry, had raised the hackles of the Ifriqiyan elite in Kairouan when they billeted troops in the city, requisitioned supplies and threatened its inhabitants. When the Syrian troops were finally united with the Ifriqiyan army near Tlemcen in western Algeria, a quarrel arose between Balj and the Fihrid commander of the African troops, Habib b. Abi ʿUbayda, which nearly resulted in the two factions of the Umayyad army coming to blows. Ultimately most of the army were captured or killed by the Berbers in the Battle of Bagdoura in 741, including Kulthum and Habib.

The Syrian expedition represented an enormous commitment of men and resources. The total number of salaried soldiers in the Umayyad army was probably no more than 250,000 to 300,000 at the most, and most of these were responsible for garrison duties at the local level.[57] These measures and their disastrous outcomes depleted military manpower in Syria and the Syrian tribes' morale and loyalty to the regime. Long term, this acceleration of activity in North Africa weakened Umayyad rule and brought about the end of offensive expansionist policy for the Caliphate.[58] At the same time, the events of the 740s mark a distinctive shift in the make-up of the army in Ifriqiya and in relations between the Arab aristocracy and their now-Muslim Berber allies. If the recruitment of Berber soldiers had been the linchpin in the conquest of North Africa, following the events of 739 they became a hostile element. There is no further mention of Berbers serving in the army, and it seems that the Umayyad army was 'de-Berberized'.[59]

THE UMAYYADS AND URBAN INVESTMENT

From the very start of the conquest proper, the Umayyad Caliphate made major interventions into the urban network. Decades before the Byzantines were defeated, the settlement of Kairouan was built as a *misr* – that is, a place which would house the Arabian troops and their families away from existing inhabitants and where they could be controlled and paid by the state.[60] Indeed, it is the act of founding Kairouan that marks the Caliphate's firm intent to capture and rule Ifriqiya, rather than use it as a raiding-ground. Although there is evidence of earlier urban settlement in the area, the Kairouan we know today was essentially a new Islamic town founded by ʿUqba b. Nafiʿ in 670. According to one tradition, he laid the foundations of Kairouan in a deserted wilderness covered in dense vegetation and frequented by reptiles and savage animals, while others suggest that the camp was established on, or on the outskirts of, an existing town. It is clear, however, that a settlement of some importance, probably that of Iubaltianae, had existed here since the Roman period, and perhaps even earlier.[61] Its position on the main inland routes and its safe distance from the depredations of Byzantine fleets made it an ideal strategic enclave for the conquest of North Africa. It also lies on a rich alluvial plain crossed by two of the great oueds (*wadi*s) of Central Tunisia (Zroud and Merguellil) which feed two large salt lakes, with plentiful grazing for the flocks and horses of the soldiers.

Although evidence for early Kairouan and Tunis is limited, it is clear that they would have looked very different to the old North African cities, which were protected by defensive walls and intra-mural forts and filled by churches as well as monumental complexes such as theatres, baths and temples – many of the latter already in ruin and repurposed for other functions.[62] Although almost nothing reliable is known about Kairouan's early urban plan, the new *misr* seems to have followed the model established several decades earlier at Basra, Kufa and Fustat during the conquests of Iraq and Egypt, where the founder's responsibility was to lay out plots of land (*khitta*s), assign them to different tribal groups and build a mosque and a *dar al-imara*.[63] Like the *amsar* of Kufa and Fustat, Kairouan was unwalled for the first century of its existence.[64] Ibn Qutayba says that the town was no more than a camp of huts and tents at the start. Other texts state that ʿUqba built a mosque and a *dar al-imara*. The chronicles also diverge on the size of the early city. ʿUqba probably settled Arabian troops in the different quarters of the city.[65] Even less is known about the early history of Tunis. According to the sources, Hassan b. al-Nuʿman founded the new city and arsenal at the base of the lagoon, on the outskirts of Thuna, a minor town and bishopric in the seventh century. As well as building or dredging a canal between the sea and lagoon, he imported Coptic labourers from Egypt to build an arsenal and ships for a new naval fleet. [66]

Despite the political uncertainty of the caliphal period in Ifriqiya, Kairouan rapidly grew into a significant city. A substantial building programme took place under Hisham (r. 724–43), whose governor Bishr b. Safwan is credited with expanding the mosque and giving it a minaret and cistern because the current mosque was too small for the population of the city. On the caliph's instructions, a *suq* was built and roofed on a long street along the west face of the Grand Mosque; like those built in Syria-Palestine, the street was probably colonnaded.[67] Hisham is also credited with building 15 reservoirs for the provision of water, one of which still survives today (the

al-Dahmani basin).[68] Here, we see clearly the role of the state: Kairouan was provided with a working infrastructure, including markets and a water supply, as well as a congregational mosque of sufficient size for the believers. Tunis was also transformed under Hisham; the governor ʿUbayd Allah transformed its mosque into a cathedral mosque, enlarged the shipyard, constructed new docks and encouraged migration into the city.[69] These building works in North Africa were part of a broader imperial building programme under Hisham that has not been sufficiently acknowledged by scholars: his reign also saw substantial investment in market and mosque construction in Syria-Palestine and beyond.[70]

While the bulk of Umayyad soldiers were stationed in Kairouan, Tunis and perhaps Tripoli, tribal units were garrisoned in the largest and most strategically important of the old towns. These towns continued to function much as they had done in the seventh century, though military occupation did have an impact on their urban fabric.[71] Soldiers were most often housed in the Byzantine forts that the majority of these towns already possessed in their centres.[72] Only rarely did the Umayyads invest in building new fortifications: the only known early eighth-century example is the small fort with a prayer-room found on the outskirts of Belalis Maior (Henchir el-Faouar), dated by a coin between 709 and 717 (and there is no confirmation that this was an official foundation).[73] At other towns, new quarters were added outside the walls or in the suburbs to house new communities of soldiers and their families as well as new immigrants from the East. Few of these extra-mural settlements have been excavated, but many of them also contained small mosques and were often laid out on orthogonal plans containing small house plots. A particularly striking feature is the introduction of a new type of courtyard house plan which is not known in North Africa before the Muslim conquests.[74]

The archaeological evidence reveals two consistent features that are hallmarks of Umayyad rule in North Africa. The first and most obvious is the separation of the largely military Arab-Muslim community from the local North Africans in new towns, extra-mural settlements and forts. The Caliphate exerted great effort to segregate its soldiers from the local populations and provide their soldiers and the ever-growing Muslim community in Ifriqiya with a separate home and identity. This practice of spatial segregation had antecedents in the late Roman Near East, where large numbers of Arabs serving the Romans as allied troops lived in separate new settlements established near to Roman cities.[75] By the time the Umayyads finally conquered Carthage, the practice of establishing separate settlements or quarters for Muslims next to, or nearby, existing cities had become widespread.[76]

The second distinguishing feature is the lack of monumental construction outside the Umayyad foundations of Kairouan and Tunis. Immense sums of money were spent on giving these new towns the appropriate urban furniture for a Muslim city, but there is no evidence for any similar effort to reproduce the Muslim urban footprint elsewhere. Rather, in existing towns, the Umayyads took over forts, rarely building new ones; even where they built new towns and extra-mural quarters, they took care to build them in abandoned, uninhabited or peripheral zones. While the absence of major building projects has often been taken as proof of the 'darkness' of eighth-century Ifriqiya and the weakness of Umayyad authority, there are other possible interpretations. Twinned with the obvious attempts to segregate soldier and local citizen, perhaps the monumentalising of the Muslim cities of Kairouan and

Tunis were as much about reinforcing a shared Muslim identity amongst the divided and fractious Muslim community as about asserting power to local North Africans. These two features point to the challenges that the Umayyad army faced in Ifriqiya as a minority foreign ruling group: 'the simultaneous need to identify themselves as "other," and new, thus different, and, at the same time, to be accepted by the existing world'.[77]

THE AFTERMATH

In the disorder that followed the Kharijite revolt and the loss of most of the Arab aristocracy, an Ifriqiyan Arab, ʿAbd al-Rahman b. Habib al-Fihri, the great-grandson of ʿUqba b. Nafiʿ and another member of the powerful Fihrid family, seized the governorship in 743 from the incumbent Umayyad nominee. Almost nothing is known about his brief regime, but it is clear that ʿAbd al-Rahman was extremely interested in provincial administration and taxation. Indeed, one of the earliest securely dated glass weights we possess is a 20 *uqiya* weight stamped by ʿAbd al-Rahman (described as *amir*), given to the provincial governor (*wali*) of Mila in 745-6.[78] He was assassinated by his son in 755 and in the following years, control of North Africa broke down and the Ibadi tribes of the Nafusa and Hawwara took advantage of the situation and captured Kairouan.

It was at this point that the new Abbasid caliph al-Mansur (r. 754–75) stepped in, perhaps already enraged because he did not receive the usual shipment of slaves as a gift from Ifriqiya – ʿAbd al-Rahman b. Habib had claimed that all the people he ruled had become Muslim and could not be lawfully enslaved.[79] According to another source, it was in response to a delegation of the 'Arabs of Ifriqiya', the remnants of the descendants of the Umayyad soldiers, who requested support against the Berbers.[80] Like ʿAbd al-Malik, al-Mansur also had close connections with Ifriqiya, for his mother was a Berber woman named Salama (presumably a prize) and he was said to have been knowledgeable about the region.[81] In the 760s, a huge army of 40,000 led by the Abbasid general Ibn al-Ashʿath al-Khuzaʿi managed to expel the Ibadis from Kairouan and to recover Ifriqiya for the Caliphate, but it was now a much-reduced province confined to Tunisia and eastern Algeria (similar to the limits of Byzantine Africa).[82]

Even more than had been the case in Umayyad times, Abbasid rule was military rule. The recapture of Ifriqiya was followed by an investment in building monumental fortifications anew or strengthening the existing defences at the biggest towns. Kairouan was given a wall in pisé by Muhammad b. al-Ashʿath al-Khuzaʿi, who became the first Abbasid governor after defeating the Ibadis.[83] Tubna (Tobna), which became capital of the Zab under the Abbasids, was also given a wall on the instructions of the caliph al-Mansur.[84] Towards the end of the eighth century, a new style of fortification – the *ribat* – began to be built along the Tunisian coastline to protect coastal towns and villages from marauding Byzantine fleets in the Mediterranean.[85] The Abbasids did not simply invest in defensive military architecture, they also imported vast numbers of new troops and reorganised the army. By the late eighth century, almost a third of the Abbasid army was concentrated in

North Africa.[86] This army, now known as the *jund*, was divided into local garrisons and spread across the towns of Ifriqiya. Some of the Umayyad army may have also been demobilised on to the land during this re-organisation.[87] With this great influx of men, primarily Khurasani troops from Iraq, came a shift in the ethnic make-up of the army. The 'northern' tribe of Tamim became the majority which shifted the tribal balance in Ifriqiya to the detriment of the 'southern' tribal groups, who had been more numerous in the Umayyad period. Distinctions between new and old settlers continued to be a significant factor in social and political tensions into the Aghlabid period and the old Arab aristocracy and troops are often distinguished from the *jund* as *ahl Ifriqiya* or *ahl al-balad*.[88]

CONCLUSION

The conquest of North Africa was a significant Umayyad achievement that brought much of the western Mediterranean under caliphal control. It was also one of their greatest failures. On the eve of the Abbasid revolution, North Africa had already fallen out of imperial control; its loss weakened Umayyad rule and marked a decisive end to offensive expansionist policy. This complex history has often led to Umayyad rule being viewed as weak and partial. A careful review of the evidence suggests that this view needs to be modified. As soon as the Umayyads seized control of Ifriqiya, their governors imposed taxation, minted coinage and established a working administration. They built harbours and two new cities that provided a centre for the growing new Muslim community. The rapid removal and change of governors suggests a high degree of control and certainly communication between the centre and the core. The policies of different governors, many of them driven by broader imperial initiatives, attempted to regulate affairs as in other provinces, but the peculiarities of the North African situation proved too much.

Ifriqiya was a frontier province held by military force. Distinctions between the military and local populations were reinforced by the spatial segregation of the soldiers and their families in the new foundations of Kairouan and Tunis, extramural quarters and forts. This practice of segregation was common throughout the Caliphate and by the time that North Africa had been conquered had clearly become a key pattern in establishing Umayyad rule. What made the North African situation distinctive was both the quantity of soldiers and the relations between the Arab military and the Berber populations – the only peoples to have been incorporated into the Umayyad armies and to have converted to Islam on such a large scale in the conquest era. Tensions arose over the way that Arabs and Berbers were paid and treated in the army, as well as over oppressive fiscal policies of certain governors against the local populations, even those who had converted to Islam. At the same time, the Arab military aristocracy and troops came to see themselves as a distinctive group during the Umayyad period, differentiated both from their Berber allies and from the eastern armies of the Umayyads (and later the Abbasids). Ifriqiya was one of the last regions to be conquered by the Arabs and it was also one of the first to leave the Caliphate, precisely because of these stark distinctions drawn up under Umayyad rule.

NOTES

1 Brett 1978; Benabbès 2004; Kaegi 2010.
2 During the conquests of Syria and Iraq in the 630s and 640s, the Muslim armies included non-Arab troops, usually units of elite Sasanian and Persian troops who defected (Kennedy 2001: 4–6), and in the following decades, non-Arab *mawali* (clients) served in the armies. Unique to North Africa, however, is the scale of conversion of local Berber tribes in the conquest phase and the numbers of Berber soldiers recruited into the conquest armies described in the sources (see Brett 1978: 509–13).
3 Djaït 1967; Djaït 1968; Djaït 1973. On the Ibadi sources, see Prevost 2008. See now Fenwick (2020) for the first monograph on early Islamic North Africa.
4 Mattingly 1996; Lorcin 2002.
5 On the historiography of Islamic archaeology and its impact on the study of the early Islamic period, see Fenwick 2020: 12–29.
6 Cressier 2013; Fenwick 2013. See Cambuzat 1982 for detailed discussions of the written and archaeological evidence for the major medieval towns of the Tell.
7 On ceramics, Cressier and Fentress 2011. For the archaeology of early Islamic Africa, see Fenwick 2013, 2020; von Rummel 2016; Pentz 2002.
8 Brett and Fentress 1996: 67–80; Modéran 2003.
9 Brett 1978: 509–11.
10 Brett 1978; Benabbès 2004.
11 Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1942: 44–5.
12 Ibn ʿIdhari 1948–51: I,17.
13 Blankinship 1994: 26.
14 Al-Bakri 1913: 71–3.
15 Crone 1980: 38.
16 Ibn ʿIdhari 1948–51, I: 34.
17 Ibn ʿIdhari 1948–51, I: 35.
18 On Musa b. Nusayr, see Benhima and Guichard 2017.
19 Brett 1992.
20 Brett and Fentress 1996: 83–7.
21 Thébert and Biget 1990; Fenwick 2013, 2020: 31–43.
22 On Carthage, see Vitelli 1981; Stevens 2016.
23 Fenwick 2019.
24 Wickham 2005:724–8; Fenwick 2020: 105–24.
25 See the debate about the Islamic state before ʿAbd al-Malik, in Hoyland 2006; Johns 2003.
26 Bacharach 1991.
27 Grabar 1987.
28 Djaït 1967; Djaït 1968.
29 Djaït 1967: 80–4.
30 Djaït 1967: 85–7.
31 Crone 1980: 44.
32 Djaït 1973.
33 Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1942: 31.
34 See Bates 1995, with important modifications in Jonson 2014.
35 Jonson 2014: 415.
36 Talbi 1966: 21–2.
37 Talbi 1981.
38 Sato 2007: 116–19.
39 Sato 2007.

40 Manzano Moreno 2010.
41 Talbi 1966: 44.
42 Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1942: 78–9.
43 Mahfoudh 2005: 284.
44 Al-Raqiq 1968: 69–70.
45 Savage 1997: 69–79.
46 Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1942: 73.
47 Blankinship 1994: 176–85 on Khurasan.
48 Al-Baladhuri 1916: 273.
49 Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1942: 112–15.
50 Blankinship 1994: 139–30, 65.
51 Abbott 1965 for an overview of his career.
52 Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 195–6.
53 Al-Tabari 1990 XV: 21–2.
54 Al-Tabari 1990 XV: 20–2.
55 Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 218.
56 Sato 2007: 121–2 on these events and the tensions between the Syrian and Ifriqiyan troops.
57 Kennedy 2001: 19–21.
58 Blankinship 1994: 230–6.
59 Djaït 1967: 108.
60 Fittingly, the Arabic *al-Qayrawan* means 'the camp'.
61 M'Charek (1999) who rejects its earlier identification as Qamuniya.
62 See Fenwick 2018, 2019 on the inherited cities.
63 Akbar 1989; Bacharach 1991; Kennedy 2010.
64 The first wall dates to 762 and was destroyed in 824: al-Bakri 1913: 56–71.
65 Despois 1930; Mahfoudh 2003; Sakly 2000 for overviews.
66 Lézine 1971: 141–54.
67 Mahfoudh 2003: 75.
68 Mahfoudh 2003; Solignac 1953.
69 Lézine 1971: 141–54.
70 On mosques: Walmsley and Damgaard 2005; markets: Foote 1999: 210–17.
71 Fenwick 2013.
72 On the Byzantine forts, see Pringle 1981.
73 Mahjoubi 1978.
74 Fentress 1987.
75 Haldon 1995: 416.
76 Whitcomb 1994, 2007.
77 Grabar 1992: 189.
78 Marçais and Lévi-Provençal 1937.
79 Talbi 1966: 25–35.
80 Ibn ʿIdhari 1948–51: I, 72.
81 Talbi 1966: 43–4.
82 On Abbasid rule and the *jund* see Kennedy 2017: 35–4.
83 Al-Bakri 1913: 56–61.
84 Al-Bakri 1913: 108; on Tubna, see Cambuzat 1982: 228–36.
85 The earliest is thought to be the *ribat* of Sousse. Lézine 1956.
86 A further 130,000 men, largely from Khurasan were imported by the Abbasids between 763 and 771. See Kennedy 2017: 36–8.
87 Djaït 1973: 111.
88 Chapuotot-Remadi 2017: 56–8.

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CHAPTER FIFTEEN

CONQUEST AND SETTLEMENT
What al-Andalus can tell us about the Arab expansion at the time of the Umayyad Caliphate*

Eduardo Manzano Moreno

THE WEST IN THE EAST

In the general framework of the Arab expansion, the conquest of the Visigothic kingdom of *Hispania* in 711 is usually considered as a late episode with no fundamental impact on the organization of the early caliphate and no implications for its political evolution. This view mirrors the perspective of the early Arabic sources from the central Islamic lands, which do not provide too many details on the conquest of this territory. This is hardly surprising. By the time the main sources on the Arab expansion were written, what came to be known as al-Andalus had no political ties with the Abbasid caliphate, as it had been governed by the Umayyads of Damascus for less than 40 years before their overthrow in 750. This helps to explain why its conquest was not considered all that relevant by authors writing in Iraq, like al-Baladhuri (d. before *c.* 900) or al-Tabari (d. 923), whose narratives are vexingly terse when they focus on the expansion in the western territories that were no longer part of the Abbasid caliphate.[1]

There is also a historiographical explanation for the dearth of information on the conquest of Iberia in sources from the central Islamic lands: both al-Baladhuri and al-Tabari wrote their works before the rise of the Umayyad caliphal historiography in al-Andalus, which fixed the canonical narratives of this conquest during the tenth century.[2] This historiography only became known in the East at a later period, as witnessed by the works of the later Arabic compiler Ibn al-Athir (d. 1233), whose account of the western conquests is much more detailed than those of his predecessors, and relied on texts that originated in Andalusian sources.[3] This suggests that early historians from the central Islamic lands lacked the materials or the interest to create an independent account of the western conquests when they wrote down their narratives on the Arab expansion. The only exception that has come down to us is the Egyptian Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam (d. 871), a religious scholar who referred to the conquest of al-Andalus with some detail, transmitting a number of traditions that had originated in the Maliki circles of his country. These traditions did not make too much impact on writers in the central Islamic lands, but were widely used by the Andalusian ʿAbd al-Malik b. Habib (d. 853), another Maliki scholar who had

travelled in Egypt and whose *Kitab al-Taʾrikh* includes the first account of the conquest written in al-Andalus, later adapted by Umayyad authors from the caliphal period.[4]

This brief survey of the historiography of the conquest of al-Andalus leads to a tantalizing conclusion: if there was ever an 'imperial narrative' of the conquest of al-Andalus in Eastern Umayyad circles, it disappeared without a trace, as shown by its total absence in later sources from the central Islamic lands. Early accounts of this conquest originated in religious circles of the Abbasid period, where people like the Medinese transmitter al-Waqidi (d. 822 CE) or Egyptian Maliki scholars like Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam took a prominent role in their elaboration.[5] For some reason, perhaps connected with al-Andalus' lack of political relevance, most of these accounts did not draw the attention of authors like al-Baladhuri or al-Tabari. However, these traditions were adapted by Andalusi Umayyad writers to compose their narratives of the conquest, and again it is noteworthy that they privileged the outlines of these foreign accounts instead of relying on local traditions.

It is also interesting to note that, although the Iberian Peninsula was deemed a marginal area from a political point of view, it was certainly part of the *dar al-islam*, as implicitly acknowledged by geographical works of the classical period. Authors like al-Yaʿqubi (d. after *c.* 908?), al-Khurradadhbih (d. 921), or al-Istakhri (d. 957) included concise descriptions of al-Andalus, which nevertheless became increasingly more detailed.[6] An ideal perception of the *dar al-islam* from its central lands at this time mapped it as a continuum that extended westwards through Egypt and Ifriqiya, but stopped at this region's limits bordering the rest of the continent. The uneven and diverse Islamization of the Maghrib at this period, and the separation by the Mediterranean fostered a vision of al-Andalus as an 'island' (*jazira*), detached from the rest of the *dar al-islam* but still strongly linked with it.

Obviously, my aim in this contribution is not to reverse this view – al-Andalus was politically and ideologically marginal until the proclamation of the second Umayyad caliphate in Cordova in the tenth century – but rather to approach some issues related to its conquest by posing the same questions that have been dealt with by recent scholarship on the early conquests of the central Islamic lands. It is my contention that these questions can be addressed from a comparative perspective, as there are aspects concerning these conquests and their early administration that can be illuminated by looking at the considerable amount of evidence that has recently come up in Iberia, so that it is possible to find hints in al-Andalus for situations that early conquerors had to face elsewhere, and vice versa. This territory was occupied when six or seven decades had already passed since the first wave of Arab expansion, and by then the Arabs had a certain experience on the administration of conquered lands. For all its tumultuous consequences, this experience had not yet substantially changed the social and political foundations that had fostered the early conquests.

SIMILARITIES AND DISSIMILARITIES IN *FUTUH* ACCOUNTS

For anyone familiar with the accounts of the early Arab expansion in the Near East, the general narrative of the conquest of Hispania displays a clear similarity: in the same way as the occupation of urban centres and rural lands in the East only came

Figure 15.1 Map of the Conquests in Iberia to *c.* 732 CE.

after Byzantine and Sasanian armies had been defeated in a few and decisive pitched battles, the annihilation of king Rodrigo's Visigothic army at the battle of Guadalete also paved the way for the quick surrender of the main cities and territories of his kingdom (see Figure 15.1). Modern interpretations have stressed the idea that after routing imperial or royal armies, the conquerors faced scattered resistance as cities and territories were left to their own devices.[7] Both general narratives, though, display an acute contrast with the accounts of the expansion in North Africa, which, after the defeat of the imperial army in 647, unanimously describe ill-fated attempts at Byzantine reaction and difficult wars with Berbers, 'who formed the core of tribal resistance'. It is significant that in these accounts there are scarce mentions of sieges or the surrender of cities – again, in stark contrast with conquest narratives of the Near East and Iberia – but rather to Berber peoples, who are mentioned as presenting fierce resistance to the Arab armies.[8]

If we are to take these *futuh* narratives not at their face value, but as broad indicators of certain historical processes, then the conclusion that can be drawn from this pattern is that Arab armies found it easier to conquer urbanized, centrally ruled lands, rather than regions with weak urban networks and deep social fragmentations. There are reasons to support the view that the latter was the case for most of North Africa. The end of Antiquity in the central and extreme Maghrib had left in its wake a vacuum of recognizable political formations, and an urban crisis that produced a landscape in which those cities that still survived were not the main centres of political or social power.[9] Obviously, this does not imply that the end of the Roman

Empire resulted in the disruption of 'civilization' and its replacement for 'barbarian' ways of life – as colonial historiography claimed – but rather that the collapse of the political and administrative structures of the late Roman Empire did not lead to the emergence of successor states in many North African lands. The notable exception was the former *Africa Proconsularis*, where the Vandal kingdom first and the Justinian *renovatio imperii* later replaced the extinguished Roman rule. It is no coincidence that this was the region where systematic Romanization and urbanization had taken place, and the region where Byzantine rule was taken over by Ifriqiya, where the early foundation of Kairouan is commonly regarded as the cornerstone for the emergence of Arab rule.[10]

From this perspective, it also makes sense that the rapid occupation of Iberia was not consolidated in the mountainous regions of the northern peninsula – an area without a proper urban network, and whose rebellious populations had never been easily assimilated into the political structures of the Roman Empire or the Visigothic kingdom.[11] Accounts of the beginning of this rebellion in late ninth-century Latin sources describe in some detail the presence of an Arab official in the main urban centre of the region, Gijón, and his defeat by unyielding populations in the neighbouring mountains, where the battle of Covadonga took place in *c.* 722.[12] Resistance to Arab rule consolidated in the political formations that emerged here and in the Pyrenees, ultimately leading to the so-called *Reconquista*. The implication is, again, that the early conquerors failed in areas with weak urban networks, and succeeded wherever they found pre-existing administrative structures they could rapidly adapt to their interests as new rulers.

NON-ARAB TROOPS IN THE CONQUERING ARMIES: THE CASE OF THE BERBERS

Another aspect of the conquest of Iberia that deserves a reading in a wider context is the composition of the army that defeated the Visigothic kingdom. These armies comprised two main ethnic components: Arabs and North African Berbers, where the Arabs were probably a minority. Kennedy's remarks concerning the earlier Arab conquests of the central Islamic lands are relevant here: 'the Muslim troops were definitely an army, not a tribal migration. They consisted overwhelmingly of adult males, without families or flocks and herds. Migration of tribes followed the conquests, after the military victories had been won.'[13] The same can be said about al-Andalus, with the further caveat that an Arab tribal migration from the central lands is pretty implausible for logistic reasons. The most likely scenario is an army whose Arab soldiers settled in al-Andalus and created families in their condition of new rulers. If these Arab soldiers had relatives, they may have been either fellow members of the army, or immigrants called to join the new settlers.

Berber troops also took part in the conquest in very significant numbers; the sources claim figures between 12,000 and 19,000 soldiers.[14] The submission of North African Berbers to Musa b. Nusayr was so close to the conquest of Iberia, ordered as it was by the same governor, that it is tempting to link both events; whatever the precise conditions of Berber submission were, it is likely that some of them implied their enrolment in the Arab armies. This recruitment of foreign troops was not something

exceptional. We know of peace agreements in Armenia, Jurjan, Dahistan, Azerbaijan, and Marw al-Rudh that required the locals to provide with 'military assistance to the Muslims upon demand, sometimes in return for dropping the *jizya* required of them'.[15] There is also substantial evidence showing that by the end of the first century AH other caliphal armies had sizable numbers of non-Arabs among their ranks: the 7,000 *mawali* that were part of the 54,000 soldiers under the leadership of governor of Khurasan, Qutayba b. Muslim, in 715, or the 20,000 troops from Central Asia that this governor also enrolled for his campaigns, clearly suggest that by this period, Umayyad armies were no longer exclusively Arab.[16]

In whatever capacity Berber troops joined the conquering army of *Hispania*, it is also clear that these soldiers did not return home after the defeat of the Visigothic kingdom. They settled in scattered outposts across different parts of the peninsula. Concentrations of tribal *nisba*s in some areas and evidence from contemporary place names suggest that this settlement may have followed tribal alignments.[17] It is more difficult to ascertain what kind of groups were involved in these settlements. French and Spanish authors have made a strong case in favour of a population migration – a kind of *Völkerwanderung* that involved whole North African tribes and helped to create a new society almost overnight.[18] Proximity to al-Andalus probably encouraged a large migration of peoples once the conquest was finished. Tenth-century Umayyad sources refer to Berber groups in marginal areas using their tribal names – like Nafza or Miknasa – an indication that sizable groups of people had preserved cohesive ties among their ranks at such a relatively late date.[19]

However, the arrival of large tribes at the time of the conquest has no clear confirmation in the archaeological record, where it has been impossible to identify an undisputable and homogenous cultural horizon that could be ascribed to a North African population suddenly settled in al-Andalus during the first half of the eighth century. Changes in pottery production, for instance, only become visible at a very slow pace in archaeological contexts dated from the end of the eighth century onwards: this might indicate not a sudden large immigration at the time of the conquest, but rather a steady flow of populations and/or the emergence of exchanges, once the settlement had consolidated in certain areas.[20]

It is unclear to what extent these Berber troops had already converted to Islam: sources report a mixed and ambiguous picture that may reflect a superficial or uneven Islamization: still in 718 – seven years after the conquest – ʿUmar II is said to have sent a group of Muslim scholars to foster conversion in Ifriqiya and the Maghrib.[21] Nevertheless, the archaeological record has shown that in al-Andalus Berbers were already islamized at a very early date. The case of three Islamic burials (see Figure 15.2) excavated in Nimes (southern France) whose individuals have been identified as North African males thanks to DNA analysis, follows a similar pattern to the spectacular cemetery of Plaza del Castillo in the city of Pamplona, in northern Spain, where the remains of 177 individuals buried according to Muslim practice and dated between 715–70 have been excavated.[22] Paleopathological analysis show that males' skeletons in Plaza del Castillo tend to present a number of enthesopathies and injuries due to military activity, which confirms that they were soldiers, probably garrisoned at the city. Nine females and three males show signs

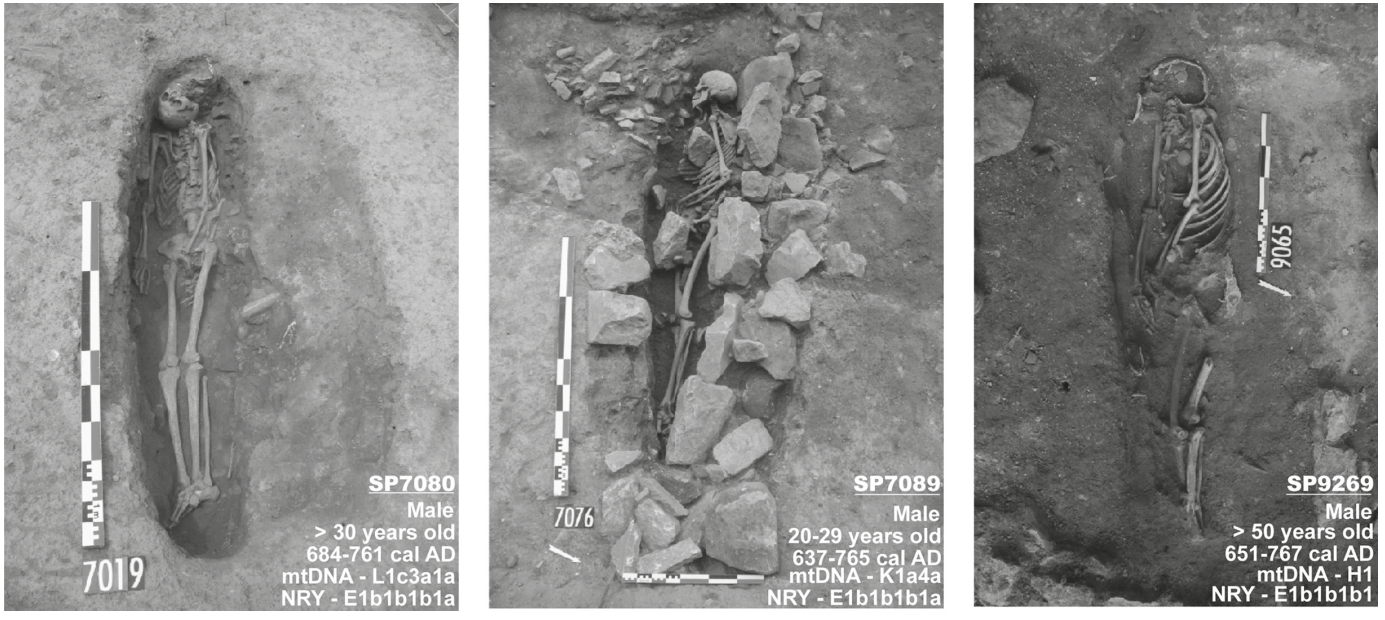

Figure 15.2 Islamic Nimes burials, with a synthesis of age and sex of individuals, radiocarbon dates, maternal and paternal lineages. Open access: Y Gleize, F Mendisco, et al. PLOS ONE 11.2 (2016): e0148583.

of dental manipulations, which have been considered as cultural markers of African origins. DNA and isotope analysis confirm a North African origin for male and female individuals, although there is also evidence for Muslims of local origins and both genders.[23]

Therefore, a significant number of male individuals buried in Pamplona's Plaza del Castillo were warriors, and many of them were Berbers: their scarred remains confirming the complaints about the dangerous conditions endured by these troops (discussed further below). The presence of North African women in this cemetery should not come as a surprise: it is consistent with information from written sources which confirm that women accompanied conquering armies.[24] The cemetery of Plaza del Castillo also has a considerable number of children's burials. This means that North African warriors were fostering families in Pamplona. Although there are cases of the resettlement of foreign peoples in frontier areas during the Umayyad period, there is no other case in the early Arab expansion in which the enrolment of foreign troops as auxiliaries ended in their massive settlement on the newly conquered territories.

This peculiarity was acutely perceived by contemporaries. Writing four decades after the fall of the Visigothic kingdom, the Latin author of the *Chronicle of 754* clearly distinguished the *Mauri* from the *Sarraceni* or Arabs in different parts of his or her work, as he or she stated that both 'had been sent together by Musa b. Nusayr'.[25] However, this writer had no doubts that the political regime that had been established was based on the rule of the Arabs: describing the beginnings of the great Berber rebellion in 740, it stressed how the *Mauri* unanimously rose in arms against the Arab yoke.[26]

This *Arabico iugo* was felt particularly in the oppressive fiscal conditions imposed by Arab governors concerning the collection of the poll tax, sometimes in the form of slave girls, despite the fact that many Berbers had converted to Islam and therefore were exempt from it. Serious grievances also related to the army, as protests raised issues like discrimination in the distribution of booty, the humiliating order to tattoo North African soldiers as if they were slaves, or the systematic deployment of Berber troops in the front line of battles, while Arab soldiers were reserved for the rear.[27] The latter claim may have some archaeological support in the injuries sustained by the men buried in the cemetery of Plaza del Castillo in Pamplona, a city where warfare was rife due to its location in the vicinity of Basque populations who had rejected Arab rule.

The justifications that Arabs gave for the harsh conditions imposed upon all Berbers were their stiff resistance against Muslim rule and the fact that some of them still remained pagans, particularly in North Africa.[28] Echoes of these deep grievances resound in Prophetic traditions that attribute a high degree of viciousness to the Berbers, or in Companions' sayings which bluntly state that belief cannot pass beyond their throats, or that people should not give alms if the beneficiary turned out to be a Berber.[29] The animosity of the conquerors was very real and ultimately led to the great Berber rebellion that exploded in 740, three decades after the conquest of *Hispania*.

This conflict reveals a considerable difference with the situation of the conquered populations in Iberia, who did not lead any revolt at this period, and certainly did not take this golden opportunity to shake Arab rule by supporting the rebels. This

gives a strong indication that agreements with members of the aristocratic elites in Iberia were working much better than those established with Berber tribal chieftains, who had either enrolled in the army, or had remained in their original lands. In 740 both Berber groups acted with common accord against Arab government in North Africa and al-Andalus for the first and last time. Whereas the former took most of the central and extreme Maghrib, wiping out any vestige of Arab administration west of Ifriqiya, Berbers from al-Andalus rapidly organized into three military columns: one marching against Toledo, the ancient capital of the Visigothic kingdom, another against Cordoba, the siege of Arab governors, and a third against the Straits in order to gain access to the North African coast.[30]

This concerted action shows an ethnic affinity still existing at this early date, but which tended to disappear in the long run. The fading of ethnic solidarity between al-Andalus' Berbers and those who remained in North Africa was due to the different pace that Arabization and Islamization took in both territories in the following decades. Although these processes did not follow a homogeneous rate, the quick replacement of Berber language for Arabic, and the early emergence of Muslim *ʿulamaʾ* from descendants of the conquering troops, indicate a clear trend of assimilation in al-Andalus. In the case of Arabization, there are still references to the use of Berber by North African troops in the second half of the eighth century, but its disappearance seems to have been quite rapid, as there are no Berber loan words in Spanish.[31] As for the Islamization process, it is worth considering the case of one of the first and more prominent Maliki scholars in al-Andalus, Yahya b. Yahya b. Kathir b. Wislas, who was a Berber from the tribe of Masmuda. Yahya had been born in *c.* 769 . His great grandfather – Wislas – had converted to Islam, and either his grandfather or father had settled in al-Andalus as a member of the conquering army. Bearing in mind that we can set the beginnings of the Islamization of North Africa with the foundation of Kairouan a century before the birth of Yahya, we can safely assume a relatively fast pace of Islamization for his family that may reflect the case of other groups in al-Andalus: a contemporary of Yahya, a certain Abu Musa al-Hawwari, who died in 796, was reknown for having mixed 'the knowledge of the Arabs' (*ʿilm al-ʿarab*) and 'religious knowledge' (*ʿilm al-din*), a perfect definition of processes of Arabization and Islamization.[32]

The case of the Berbers shows a very interesting trend associated with the early Arab expansion. Processes of assimilation identified with Arabization and Islamization started very soon after the conquest. Again, both processes seem to have taken a faster rhythm in those regions where urban networks already existed: as it was also the case with some regions of the Maghrib, in the marginal areas of Iberia's central plateau a number of sectarian movements led by Berbers during the eighth and ninth centuries have been rightly interpreted as symptoms of their slow and complex Islamization.[33] This contrasts with the considerable number of Maliki scholars of Berber origins coming from cities like Córdoba and Seville, which highlight the uneven pattern of Islamization of North African populations once they had settled in al-Andalus.[34]

EARLY LOGISTICS AND ADMINISTRATION

Some recent interpretations of the Arab conquest of Iberia have stressed the idea that this was an unexpected event, the consequence of a *razzia* that turned out to be successful.

The first expeditioners achieved resounding military victories that convinced the governor of North Africa, Musa b. Nusayr, that a full-fledged conquest was feasible.[35] There are some reasons to reject this view. The involvement of the Visigothic king in the battle of Guadalete shows that the expedition was perceived as a real threat: the fate of other territories was, obviously, well known in Toledo and served as a reminder of the catastrophic consequences that expeditions sent by the Arabs might entail. Finally, the division of the conquering army into several columns, and the identification of the main cities as objectives for the conquerors recall a similar strategy to that followed by Arab armies in other expeditions in the central Islamic lands.[36] The conquest of 711 was, therefore, carefully planned and manned from the governorship of North Africa and with the knowledge and support of the caliphal administration.

The strong dependence of the new territory on the central government is shown by a significant and uncontroverted detail: although the army took several years to occupy most of the Peninsula effectively, Arab governors were immediately and regularly appointed, either by the *wali*s from North Africa or, more rarely, directly from Damascus. The *Chronicle of 754* states, for instance, that governor Hudhayfa b. al-Ahwas al-Qaysi had his authority conferred in 728 by the governor of North Africa (*auctoritate a duce Africano accepta*). In other cases, appointment was made *per principalia iussa* or *monitu principum*, again implying a tight control from the central government.[37] The fact that these governors did not belong to the conquering army, but were sent from abroad, and that they enjoyed short terms of office, are also indicators of the degree of centralization that the early caliphate managed to impose in such a distant province, which was helped by the efficiency of the courier communication system that had been established by the Marwanid caliphs.[38]

The main problem that comes to mind in connection with this centralization concerns logistical issues. Damascus is almost 6,000 kilometres away from Cordoba, Alexandria about 4,000, and Kairouan more than 2,000. Terrestrial communications across such huge distances may have taken months, if not a whole year, particularly if we think of army contingents: an unavoidable burden for any attempt to impose effective rules and commands from the caliphal administration. However, this burden may have been lighter if we consider the use of maritime routes to cross such big distances: in Roman times sailing from Carthage to Hispania's southern shore took less than ten days; from Alexandria, less than one month.[39] Our sources do not provide with any specific details on how communications worked at the time of the Arab conquest, and therefore any hypothesis on this regard forcefully has to remain highly speculative. However, there are reasons to believe that sea routes – and not inland routes – played a crucial role in the logistics of the conquest and of the early Umayyad administration in al-Andalus. One of the main concerns of caliph ʿAbd al-Malik (685–705) after the occupation of Ifriqiya was to build an arsenal for making ships in Tunis: arguably, this fleet's objective was to attack Byzantine's shores, but it is legitimate to think that once these ships were built, they were used to ease communications with Iberia. Moreover, the important role that the takeover of Ceuta plays in the accounts of the conquest may reflect the strategic value conferred to the occupation of this maritime outpost of the North African shore of the Straits of Gibraltar as a naval base where vessels transporting troops could gather.

Evidence from Egyptian papyri also confirms the extraordinary importance of the Umayyad fleet during the first years of the eighth century. The famous Arabo-Greek

papyrus dated in 714 in which the son of Musa b. Nusayr, ʿAbd Allah, requests 95 sailors for the army heading to Pentapolis clearly shows the dependence on ships for troops' movements.[40] Other papyri offer numerous examples of the compulsory service required from the conquered population of Egypt to serve in the fleet as part of their tribute. Figures for sailors and auxiliaries gathered by these documents are so high, that 'to say that they were in the thousands is probably a conservative estimate'. Also common in these documents are references to goods requisitions, equipment, and 'provisions and supplies for Muslim fighters'.[41] The Umayyad fleet in Egypt, and also probably in Ifriqiya, was very strong at the time of the conquest of al-Andalus, and it is legitimate to think that it was vital for the military operations and the smooth operation of the early administration.

One of the missions of this fleet may have been the transport of newly appointed governors of al-Andalus. The *Chronicle of 754* describes a case in which the new governor, al-Haytham b. ʿUfayr al-Kinani (729–30), showed upon his arrival 'the document of the ruler sent from Africa so that he could take charge immediately of the government of Spania' – *ob Spaniam regendam strenue* sigillum *uel auctoritatem principalem a suprafatis* [Africanis] *partibus missam patenter demonstrat*.[42] The mention of this *sigillum* shows that official documents were produced by new governors as a proof for their appointment. The binding force of such documents also implies the existence of archives, which Arab sources occasionally mention elsewhere.[43]

The widespread use of letters and documents by the early caliphal administration can be linked to the considerable number of lead seals with Arab inscriptions that have come out in Iberia and southern France in recent years. In Ruscino (Perpignan) alone the use of metal detectors in the residual mounds of previous archaeological excavations has brought to light more than 70 of them.[44] Some of these seals bear names of governors in al-Andalus otherwise known by written sources: al-Hurr (716–18), al-Samh (718–21), or ʿAnbasa b. Suhaym (721–5).[45] A lead seal mentioning the latter is one of the best-preserved specimens. Its complete legend ('In the name of God. This is what is ordered by the governor ʿAnbasa b. Suhaym') bears a strong resemblance to the formulary of an Egyptian papyrus with the name of ʿUbaydallah b. al-Habhab, who was governor of Egypt (728–34) and Ifriqiya, where exactly the same expression – 'what is ordered by the governor' – is used (*hadha ma amara bihi al-amir* …).[46] In some cases, inscriptions contain the word *musalaha* followed by a place name, like *Ukshunuba* (Faro, Portugal) – probably a reference to the existence of a peace agreement there. But there are also references to the legal partition of booty in one of the seals found in of Ruscino.

Although it is still unclear how these seals were used – suspended from letters, or bags attached to people's necks – its relation with centralized tax levying or quittance practices is clear.[47] The new tax system introduced in al-Andalus is mentioned by the *Chronicle of 754*, which gives precious details on the elaboration of fiscal census in the aftermath of the conquest: the first was compiled by governor al-Samh b. Malik al-Jawlani (718–21 seven years after the conquest; the second, perhaps 15 years later, under governor ʿUqba b. al-Hajjaj (735 or 736–40 or 741); the third under the governorship of Yusuf al-Fihri (747–56) perhaps also following a 15-year interval.[48] All this evidence points in a similar direction. Despite the fact that al-Andalus was a territory which laid far away from the central lands of the Caliphate, the organization of

its conquest denotes a considerable degree of centralization. After settling in the land the conquerors and their successors strove to achieve a higher degree of independence from the metropolis – a typical tension in all empires – but the overall inception and early organization of the conquest clearly reveal a centralized structure.

THE EVIDENCE OF COINAGE

The centralizing aspects involved in the conquest of Iberia are also evident in the rapid minting of coins by the early Arab administration.[49] In the aftermath of 711 the Arabs issued gold (*dinar*), silver (*dirham*), and copper (*fals*, pl. *fulus*) coins (see Figure 15.3). This coinage was radically different from the previous Visigothic system that had been based on the sole emission of *tremisses*, fractions of a third of the late Roman *solidus*. Again, this is a symptom of a centralized conquest, as the replacement of a monetary system and the quick emission of new coins with relatively homogeneous patterns would have been unthinkable had a strong central command not been in place.

The new gold, silver, and copper coins were not always minted in al-Andalus with the same intensity or periodicity. Dinars were coined steadily, but by no means regularly, in the years after the conquest. Their minting abruptly stopped in AH 127/744–45 CE, and no golden coinage was minted again in al-Andalus until the proclamation of the Umayyad caliphate in AH 300/929 CE. In stark contrast with gold, copper *fulus* were issued in massive quantities at the time of the conquest. They are consistently documented in early Islamic archaeological contexts and stray finds throughout most of al-Andalus, although their minting also declined from the second half of the eighth century onwards. Finally, reformed dirhams of excellent quality were struck from AH 108/726–7 CE, but always in few numbers and with several annual gaps. However, after the proclamation of the Umayyad dynasty in 756, silver issues gradually increased in quantity from the last quarter of the eighth century, and particularly from the early ninth century, onwards.[50]

Hence, early Arab coinage in al-Andalus included massive copper issues, gold dinars struck in significant but uneven numbers during three decades, and scarce silver dirhams of excellent quality. This means that, at this early stage, copper, silver, and golden coins did not conform to a unified system but were rather issued depending on

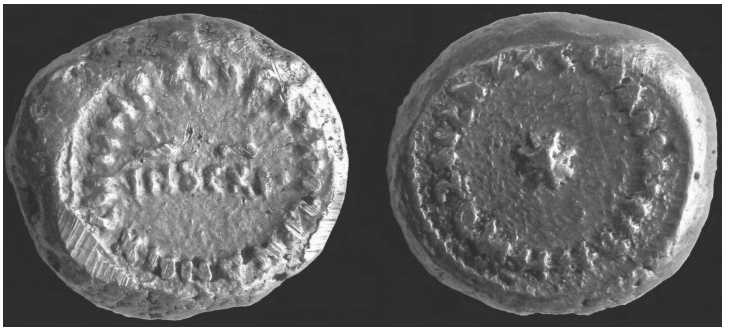

Figure 15.3 Gold solidus. Indiction XI. AH 94/712–13 CE, mint SPN, 4.90 grams,14mm. By permission of the Tonegawa Collection.

the availability of metal and the requirements of the conquerors. In the case of dinars, for instance, precious metal most probably came from spoils of the conquest, as gold ores had ceased to be exploited and sub-Saharan trade had not yet emerged – a view which finds support in metallographic analysis.[51] The case of copper was different. Visigothic kings had never minted this coinage, although late Roman copper coins still circulated in Iberia, as witnessed by findings in archaeological sites. This means that there was a strong demand for these coins, although kings felt no necessity to meet it. In stark contrast, Arab conquerors considered copper coinage a priority, as witnessed by its early and massive minting.[52]

I would suggest that the explanation for this disparity lies in the different role played by the army in both polities. Whereas in the kingdom of Toledo the standing army had been replaced by a conglomerate of personal retinues, attached only to their respective landlords, soldiers of the conquering army in 711 were under a central command and had to be maintained on a regular basis. No trace of the old *annona* system was left in *Hispania* at this date, and soldiers could not depend on constant looting for their subsistence, as agreements had been reached with conquered populations. Under these circumstances, copper coinage became the main means of subsistence for the rank and file, as they were paid their regular salary, or *nafaqa*, in *fulus*: some of these coins had even the legend *nafaqa fi sabil Allah* – 'payment in God's path' – inscribed on them.[53] This would also explain their dispersion in al-Andalus, as these *fulus* were used in daily transactions in circuits of petty commodity exchange. Food, clothing, or small services were paid for in *fulus*, and it is quite possible that these modest coins witnessed the first interactions between the conquerors and the conquered. It is noteworthy that Arab *fulus* are frequently found mixed with late Roman copper pieces – a good indication of their smooth integration into pre-existing circuits of coin circulation. Once the conquest period was over and members of the conquering army became demobilized, either by becoming landowners, or by engaging on activities other than the military, these *fulus* were no longer necessary, something that would explain why their minting stopped.

Al-Andalus' earliest coinage pattern, which shows a predominance of copper coinage, combined with a certain amount of golden coinage issues, presents a striking resemblance to the coinage circulating in Syria Palestine during the seventh century before the reforms of caliph ʿAbd al-Malik. Apart from the 'standard Byzantine issues in copper and gold' that were circulating before the Arab conquest in the region, the conquerors minted substitute copper coinage replicating current or previous Byzantine issues, as well as the golden 'transitional Byzantine-Muslim issues' and the 'standing caliph series'.[54] Copper coins were minted in local mints across Syria and Palestine and this also reinforces the close link between this coinage and the army. I would suggest that the abundance of copper mints in Syria and Palestine was due to the necessity of producing coins used for the daily maintenance of the troops that became the backbone of the Syrian *junds*.

Copper coinage, however, is not the only new monetary element that findings reveal in al-Andalus. Eastern dirhams are also very prominent in the early archaeological register. As noted above, the minting of silver coins in al-Andalus was very limited at this period, but a number of hoards containing dirhams minted in the central Islamic lands have been found in different parts of Iberia. The most important is the one found in Baena (Córdoba) containing 351 pieces, some of which are fragments. Most of these dirhams had been minted in the central Islamic lands, and only 28 of

them were issued in al-Andalus. But what is interesting is that, whereas the latest coin minted in al-Andalus dates from AH 136/753–754 CE the latest eastern *dirham* was minted in Wasit in AH 124/741–2 CE.[55] This date is very relevant. It coincides with the beginning of the Berber rebellion. Soon after the rebels had achieved some military success, the Syrian *jund*, the imperial army of the Umayyad caliphs, was dispatched by caliph Hisham to North Africa in order to crush the revolt. After having been defeated in the vicinity of the river Sebou, the remains of this army were ferried to al-Andalus, where they were deployed by governor ʿAbd al-Malik b. Qatan in order to fight and finally defeat the Berbers who had revolted there.

The coincidence of the latest date of the eastern coins included in the hoard of Baena with the expedition of the Syrian *jund* towards North Africa that ended in al-Andalus cannot be coincidental. This is not the only hoard found in al-Andalus that shows the striking feature of having a majority or a sizable amount of eastern coins. At least another seven hoards have been found that display a majority of dirhams issued in eastern mints with dates that range from AH 107/725–6 CE until AH 128/745–6 CE. These coins were not a by-product of an eighth-century long-distance trade, as has been suggested.[56] They had arrived to al-Andalus in the bags of their possessors, the soldiers of the Syrian *jund*, who were paid in dirhams whenever they went on campaign.

The idea that soldiers of the Syrian *jund* received stipends in silver coinage when they went on expeditions finds support in the location of mints. Mints striking dirhams were either at major cities, like Damascus or Wasit, or in areas where there was heavy military activity at this period, like Armenia, Azerbaijan. or the Caucasus.[57] These mints coined the dirhams that were paid to members of the Syrian *jund*, which was moved around the empire in order to crush rebellions or defend frontiers. When these soldiers were dispatched to North Africa and later moved to al-Andalus, they carried with them these silver coins, which eventually found their way into hoards and stray finds discovered in the Iberian Peninsula.

Therefore, al-Andalus may provide some answers to the complex question of the maintenance of the military system during the Umayyad caliphate. Soldiers were paid a regular stipend, or *nafaqa*, in *fulus*, copper coins that were minted locally and were used by these soldiers for their daily necessities. One of the advantages of this system was that it fostered the interaction of troops with local populations in the territories where they were established. However, when these soldiers were sent on an expedition, they received payments (*ʿata*) in dirhams. This is why some of these silver issues were coined at mobile mints that operated in regions where there was military activity. Whereas *fulus* were essential in circuits of petty commodity exchange, in which coins with higher denominations were out of place, dirhams served as a stimulus to regional exchanges of goods, and perhaps even of some luxury items.

In both cases the army was a new focus of demand that was provided with the monetary means to attract products or goods. Once this army had finally settled it became a powerful factor of social change. After having crushed the Berber rebellion in al-Andalus and vanquished the resistance of members of the first conquering army, the so-called *baladis*, Syrian troops finally settled in circumscriptions that replicated the original oriental *junds*. A few years later, the Umayyad ʿAbd al-Rahman b. Muʿawiya was proclaimed *amir* in Cordoba (755) and the Syrians rapidly became the backbone of the fiscal and the military administration of the

emirate. In the circumscriptions where they had settled, members of the *jund* were entrusted with the collection of taxes on behalf of the central government: they kept part of these taxes for their own maintenance, and this explains why *fulus* were not necessary any longer and their minting stopped in the second half of the eighth century.[58] But these troops also performed military duties, which means that they went on campaigning whenever the Umayyad emir launched an expedition against the Christian north. With some modifications, this was the same system that had prevailed in the Near East.

NOTES

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1 Al-Baladhuri 1863–66: 230–31; 1924: 365–6; al-Tabari 1879–1901: II, 1235; 1990: 182–3.
2 Manzano 1999: 399.
3 Ibn al-Athir 1979: IV, 539–40, 561–5, 567–8; V, 22.
4 Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1925: 204–25; ʿAbd al-Malik b. Habib 1991: 136–44. For the Egyptian Maliki *ʿulamaʾ* as sources of accounts of the conquest of al-Andalus, Makki 1957.
5 Al-Waqidi is mentioned as source of some information on the conquest in the *Kitab al-Taʾrikh* and in the late compilation of Ibn ʿIdhari who gathers materials from the caliphal tenth-century historian Ahmad al-Razi. ʿAbd al-Malik b. Habib (1991: 149; Ibn ʿIdhari, 1948–51: II, 6, 7–8, 13, 24.
6 Ibn Khurdadhbih 1967: 88–90; al-Istakhri 1967: 41–2; al-Yaʿqubi 1861: 143–5.
7 Compare García Sanjuán 2013: 393 and Kaegi 1992: 144–6.
8 Kaegi 2010: 217.
9 Von Rummel 2016: 116–17.
10 Lepelley 1992: 65.
11 Barbero and Vigil 1974: 97.
12 'At the same time Munuza, companion of Tariq, was governor in the city of Gijon in that region of the Astures' – *Per idem ferre tempus in hac regione Asturiensium prefectus erat in ciuitate Ieione nomine Munuza compar Tarec. Crónicas Asturianas* 1985: 122.
13 Kennedy 2001: 4.
14 Chalmeta 1994: 126.
15 Al-Qadi 2016: 96.
16 Kennedy 2001: 44–5; Husayn 2012: 279–83.
17 De Felipe 1997: 59–62, 276–7.
18 Guichard, 1976; Barceló 2001.
19 Manzano 2006: 175–6.
20 Manzano 2003: 546.
21 Al-Qadi 2016: 98–9.
22 Gleize et al. 2016: 8; De Miguel Ibáñez et al. 2016: 165–8.
23 Prevedorou et al. 2010: 42–5.
24 Donner 1981: 119; Rius 2012: 270.
25 … *Arabas una cum Mauros a Muze missos* …, *Crónica de 754* 1980: 52, 3–5. On resettlement of foreign groups, al-Qadi 2016: 102–3.
26 '… Berbers… having revolted on common agreement, shook their necks from the Arab yoke openly' – … *Mauri … uno consilio efferentes ceruices publice excutiunt ab Arabico iugo*, *Crónica de 754* 1980: 84, 8–9.

27 Manzano 2006: 90–1.
28 Brett 1979: 506–7; Savage 1992: 358–9.
29 Bashir 1997: 78.
30 *Crónica de 754* 1980: 85, 7–11.
31 Manzano 2006: 171–2. The only linguistic trait that may have been linked to Berber presence is the assimilation of the definite article in Arabic – *al* – to Arabisms in Spanish – for example *algodón*: compare to English *cotton*. It has been suggested that this feature may reflect a 'pidginized language' spoken by Berbers: Corriente 1999: 61. See however the criticisms by Noll 2006: 37–9.
32 Fierro 1997: 272–4.
33 Aguadé 1986: 74.
34 de Felipe 1992: 169.
35 Arce 2011: 290–3.
36 Donner 1981: 269; Vila 1936: 215–20.
37 *Crónica de 754* 1980: 15, 16–18; 59, 7; 78, 4–6.
38 Silverstein 2007: 53–89.
39 I have drawn these calculations from the Stanford Geospatial Network Model of the Roman World: Scheidel and Meeks 2017.
40 Bell 1909–13: 189–91.
41 Al-Qadi 2016: 115–16.
42 *Crónica de 754* 1980: 78, 4–6.
43 Bravmann 1968: 87–9.
44 Marichal and Senac 2007: 7071.
45 Ibrahim 2016: 14–19.
46 Ibrahim 1999: 192; compare Donner 2016: 34–5.
47 Robinson 2005: 434–5.
48 *Crónica de 754* 1980: 69, 3–5; 82, 6–8; 91, 10–14.
49 I have also addressed these issues in Manzano Moreno 2018.
50 Bates 1992: 281–5.
51 Guerra and Roux 2002: 224, 226–7. Golden issues of the tenth century clearly reveal 'un changement de minerai d'or' probably due to the opening of sub-saharan routes.
52 Martín Escudero 2013: 316–20.
53 Walker 1957: 225, 227, 271.
54 Walmsley 2010, 25–6.
55 Martín Escudero 2005: 42–4.
56 Walmsley 2000: 337.
57 Bates 1989: 89–111.
58 Manzano Moreno 1998: 85–114.

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CHAPTER SIXTEEN

ECOLOGY, ECONOMY, AND THE CONQUEST OF KHURASAN

Arezou Azad

INTRODUCTION

Khurasan in the seventh and eighth centuries was a conglomeration of topographies, economic, social and politico-administrative networks and institutions, as well as peoples of diverse religious and ethno-linguistic backgrounds. The area is too large, and our knowledge of seventh–eighth-century Khurasan too patchy for a synthetic study of its economy and ecology. Instead, one aspect, in particular, shall be investigated: the extent to which economic and ecological concerns motivated the early Muslim conquest and rule of Khurasan.

In order to answer this question, it is helpful to clarify what our early and medieval sources would have understood Khurasan to be, and to provide a brief overview of its political history in the seventh and eighth centuries. Khurasan was one of four Sasanian provincial satrapies, governed from Marw by a general of the cavalry (*ispahbadh*).[1] Practically, this translated into an engagement focused on policing the frontiers with the Hephthalite, Chionite, and eastern Turk (Badghis and Tukharistan) domains in Central Asia and eastern and southern Afghanistan, and with the Tang dynasty lands of China. The Sasanians would also exact taxes on their Khurasani subjects, while Balkh and Herat served as Sasanian mint towns.

The origin of the term Khurasan is pre-Islamic Middle Persian: *khwar* meaning 'sun', and *asan* meaning 'about to come', or 'rising', so 'the land where the sun rises'. The vantage point is from the West looking at the East, and thus, by definition, the region is named in outsider's terms. Moses Khorenatsʾi[2] describes pre-Islamic Khurasan as extending from Gurgan (Iran) in the southeast Caspian to Badakhshan and Tukharistan on the upper Oxus and Bamiyan in the Hindukush (Tajikistan and Afghanistan).[3] Al-Yaʿqubi states that much of that territory was under Sasanian overlordship in the seventh century.[4]

After the Muslim conquests in the early eighth century, Khurasan was centred around today's northern Afghanistan (that is, north of the Hindu Kush), spanning eastwards from the Caspian Sea to Marw and Balkh and finally Badakhshan at the frontier on the trade route to Tibet via the Wakhan corridor (see Figure 16.1). The Muslims in eighth-century Khurasan engaged in trade with the non-Muslim, or *kafir*, lands of Zabulistan and Kabulistan (and by extension, Hind).[5] It was not until the ninth century during the Saffarid conquests that parts of southern Afghanistan (Kabul,

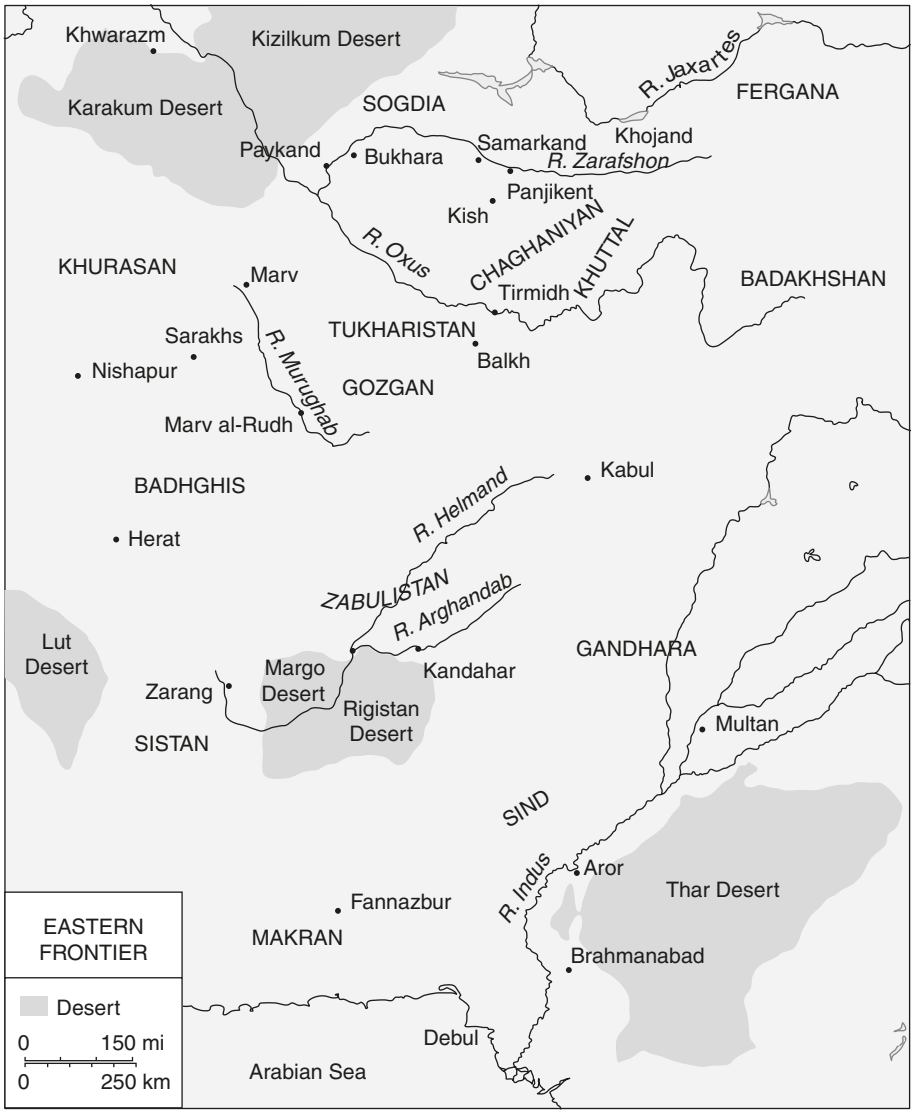

Figure 16.1 Map of Khurasan in Early Medieval Times. Based on 'General Maps' in B. Spuler (2015) *Iran in the Early Islamic Period*. Leiden: Brill.

Zabulistan and Zamindawar and al-Rukhkhaj, that is, modern-day Qandahar) were added to the region.[6] Thus, Khurasan in the seventh and eighth century was an administrative unit adopted by the early Muslims from the Sasanians,[7] while in the ninth and tenth centuries it grew to cover a vast expanse of landlocked territory that when superimposed on a modern political map comprised some of the present territories of Afghanistan, parts of eastern Iran and of south-eastern Turkmenistan.[8]

In the medieval Islamic geographical-administrative literature, too, Khurasan is placed in 'the East' (*al-mashriq*),[9] and occasionally divided into four 'quarters' (*arbaʿ*, sing. *rubʿ*), centred around Marw, Balkh, Nishapur, and Herat.[10] Each of these

quarters consisted of a number of districts, with one district specifically named after one of the four cities that served as capitals.[11] In medieval historical literature and poetry, Khurasan is not only a physical, but also an imagined space.[12] Khurasan has a sentimental value to people of the Persianate world as a cradle place of New Persian (the language and its dialects are spoken in the region today). And it is considered a vital locus for early Persian poets, including Rudaki (fl. first half of the tenth century CE), Daqiqi (d. *c.* AH 370/980 CE), Firdawsi (fl. 400/1010), Abu al-Qasim ʿUnsuri (d. 431–41/1039–50), and Mawlana (Balkhi) Rumi (d. 672/1272). Khurasan is also celebrated as a chief centre of the early strands of mystical Islam,[13] and of medieval Islamic scholarship – Hanafism, in particular.[14] These imaginations are subjective, of course, and reductionist. Khurasan had significant Arabic-speaking communities from the beginning of the Islamic conquests. Hanafism only attained the shape of a 'school' in the later medieval period. And the oft-repeated idea that the Oxus River formed a natural frontier between Persian and the Turkic lands or between Muslim and *kafir* lands stands in contrast to the medieval remains of ancient floating bridges that facilitated Oxus crossings.[15]

While the Sasanian grip on the territory is not disputed, there are questions regarding the profoundness and temerity of Sasanian influence beyond the collection of taxes. The accounts of the Umayyad conquests in Balkh, for example, are remarkable for the absence of any mention of a strong Sasanian administrative or military resistance (or even presence). According to most accounts, in or around 86/705, Qutayba b. Muslim (d. 96–97/715–16) met the *ispahbadh* of Balkh and some local dignitaries, and in or around 90/708–9 the *ispahbadh* of Balkh was one of the local rulers to whom the Hephthalite leader Nizak wrote when he was trying to unite the local aristocracy of Tukharistan to resist Qutayba's advances. Far more prominent in the accounts is the chief abbot of the Buddhist Naw Bahar monastery, temple and estate of Balkh, the *barmak*. He appears to have played the role of a major leader in a revolt there.[16]

The Umayyads in Khurasan faced opposition again after they reinstated the poll tax on new converts. Rebellions broke out in the Balkh, Herat, and Sistan regions. The uprising of a rebel named al-Harith b. Surayj was particularly popular in the areas around Balkh, lasting from 734 to 746. Al-Harith challenged the selection process for the governorship of Balkh, directly confronting the governor Nasr b. Sayyar (d. 748) and even the caliph about the matter. Almost immediately afterward, the Umayyads were challenged again by rebels with strong support in Khurasan. This time the rebellion was led by Abu Muslim and the Abbasids, who also sought to bring the caliphate into line with Islamic principles. In 749, they succeeded in overthrowing the Umayyad caliphate and establishing their own in its place.

Among the most popular Islamic conversion narratives from Khurasan is that of the Buddhist *barmak* and his descendents who rose to prominence in the early caliphate. Islamic accounts describe the head *barmak* as a *mawla* who voluntarily traveled to Syria to declare his loyalty to the caliph Hisham b. ʿAbd al-Malik (r. 723–42). The Barmakids' influence increased after their support for the Abbasid struggle against the Umayyads, leading to the Abbasid takeover of the caliphate in 749.[17] The next generation of Barmakids formed the immediate entourage of the caliph Harun al-Rashid (r. 786–809) in the new caliphal capital, Baghdad. There, Yahya b. Barmak

(d. 805) and his sons Fadl (d. 808) and Jaʿfar (d. 803) served as vizier and governor, respectively.

Coming back to the question of the economic and ecological motivations of the early Muslim conquerors and rulers requires considering what drove the Umayyads and early Abbasids to venture as far east as Khurasan which as we have seen took them all the way to the borders with China. The perception that appears to have had the most currency on the Arab motivations here as driven by economic interest is exemplified in Noelle-Karimi's statement that:

> The medieval military and political protagonists [in Khurasan] were not driven by gaining or maintaining boundaries. Rather, their interest was to control urban centres and fertile land, as well as securing the trade routes and the proceeds to be gained from the circulation of goods.[18]

The implication here is that the Arab conquest and early Islamic caliphate in Khurasan was driven by economic concerns, rather than merely territorial gain or the securing of borders. The extent to which this holds true will be probed here using sources 'close to the ground' in the form of local histories and documents. Whether post-conquest Arab rule led to an expansion of the Khurasani economy, contracted it, or kept it stable is another question that is addressed here, albeit inconclusively. With Michael Morony, it is argued that the economy may have expanded in the early Islamic period, but that conceptual errors and source gaps render this conclusion highly tentative.[19] The religious agenda of the Arab conquerors is, of course, another important factor, which will, however, not be discussed at this occasion.

In order to test the economic and ecological motivation of the Muslim conquerors, it may be helpful to go back to fundamental questions of geography and consider the shape and composition of the land: Khurasan's mountains, waters, flora and fauna and natural disasters. This will provide the backdrop for the patterns of food production, animal breeding, mineral resource extraction, trade and commerce, and fiscal management in the Umayyad and early Abbasid period. On this basis, some further tentative conclusions may be drawn on the motivations of the conquerors and the growth of the early Islamic Khurasani economies.[20]

The emphasis in this chapter on the physical landscape and environment should not be seen as an underestimation of the importance of Khurasani towns and cities. The anonymous Persian geography, *Hudud al-ʿalam* (372/982) lists about 80 of the most important cities in the province, of which the author calls Nishapur 'the largest and richest … in Khurasan', adding that it belongs to a metropolis of 13 districts and four 'houses' (*khan*s). As the *Hudud al-ʿalam* emphasises, a 'town' was not just a restricted urban centre, but part of a larger metropolis that included suburbs and rural environs.[21] Raw material extraction and production points were found in these conurban and peripheral areas, and the wider rural environment. Thus, the economies of cities themselves need to be understood within their wider environmental context. Cities were and are major economic centres – mainly at the end of the business line as buyers and sellers of products. However, most human-made urban infrastructure – with the exception of water canals, bazaars, and caravanserais which have a direct impact on trade (and public health) – shall not form a central point of discussion here.[22] Another caveat of this chapter is that there will be little room for

discussion on the social hierarchies in Khurasan, and how they may or may not have affected the economy. It is generally accepted that during the period under review the landed estates were run by *dihqan*s who as landlords carried out administrative functions and land tenure-holding in relation to the peasants. They often served as *mawali* (clients) to the Arab tribesmen who were holding positions in the Umayyad and Abbasid provincial and city administrations.[23]

Sources

Besides the Persian *Hudud al-ʿalam*, much of our understanding of the economy and ecology of Khurasan based on textual sources stems from the Arabic accounts provided by administrator-geographers of the ninth and tenth centuries, such as al-Yaʿqubi (d. after 292/905), Ibn Khurradadbih (d. *c.* 300/911), Ibn al-Faqih (d. after 292/905), al-Istakhri (*c.* 338/950), al-Masʿudi (*c.* 344–5/955–6), Ibn Hawqal (*c.* 378/988), and al-Muqaddasi (d. after 380/990).[24] The 'universal' historians constitute another common set of authors, notably al-Baladhuri (d. *c.* 279/892), al-Tabari (d. 310/923), Balʿami (d. 363/974), Gardizi (*c.* 440–3/1049–52) and Bayhaqi (470/1077) who focus on political and military aspects more than anything.[25] All these sources, however, not only post-date the events by at least a century or two, but the most influential were also produced outside of Khurasan.

In contrast, the local histories of Khurasan – notably, the surviving chronicles of Balkh,[26] Bayhaq,[27] and Herat[28] – although written quite late (eleventh and twelfth centuries) are indigenous to the region. And yet, they remain underused in the economic literature.[29] The documentary record has equally been overlooked. The documents from Bactria and Tukharistan, which were written in Bactrian, Arabic, Judeo-Persian, and Early New Persian, span a crucial period (fourth to eleventh centuries) and provide rare insights into cultivation practices and fiscal administration in the Umayyad and early Abbasid period through to the Ghurid period.[30] The corpuses pertain to different local archives, and consist of legal contracts, receipts, and letters dealing with a wide range of personal matters (including slave emancipation, land surveying, taxation, dowries, peace-making between feuding parties in a family, land deeds, and receipts for the sale of goods).

All of these local sources will be brought into the discussion here, adding to what we currently find in the modern literature on the ecology, environment, and physical geography of the region. This literature is largely descriptive in nature, with significant early twentieth-century compendia produced by Barthold and Le Strange,[31] as well as more recent encyclopaedia entries written by Bosworth and others.[32] In addition, we have compendia like the UNESCO-sponsored *History of Civilizations of Central Asia* and the *Cambridge History of Iran*, military gazetteers like the *Historical and Political Gazetteer of Afghanistan*, and ethnographic and economic studies of the region (largely in Russian).[33] The latter have a modern focus but provide useful indicative data while analytical studies remain outstanding.[34]

On the economy, we are greatly indebted to Michael Morony. Morony argues that a study of seventh- and eighth-century economic activity in former Sasanian territories begs the question of continuity from Sasanian economic circumstances and methods to Islamic times. Morony also points to the question of teleology given that early Islamic developments are really only seen from the ninth century sources

onwards. In this regard, the Bactrian documents from the eighth century may be able to fill the gap somewhat. Morony further argues that another problem concerns the rather limited way in which economic activity has been studied, based on tax figures, or the trading of goods. The impact of theft, booty, gifts, tribute, and religious transactions, such as pilgrimage, is often left out of the equation. Moreover, the focus on trade does not replace the production figures necessary for an assessment of the economy. This chapter will still draw heavily on tax and trade figures, such as they are, but will also consider production, manufacturing and public services, including water management.[35]

ECOLOGY AND ECONOMY AS MOTIVATING FORCES FOR EARLY MUSLIM AMBITIONS IN KHURASAN

In order to understand the possible economic motivations of the early Muslims in Khurasan, it is helpful to consider, first, the landscape and natural resources of seventh- and eighth-century Khurasan. Mountains brought to the area a highly desirable resource that was only obtained with difficulty (through underground canals, or *qanat*s) in many other parts of the caliphate: water. The dominant mountain ranges ran roughly northwest-to-southeast. To the north, the Khurasani highland was framed by the Alburz and Turkmen-Khurasan chain that continues with the Hindu Kush (Paropamisos) ranges of northern Afghanistan, some of which rise to 3,400 metres. The Hindu Kush forms the watershed between the Aral and Indus basins, and is one of Asia's highest mountain ranges, including the Kuh-i Baba (5,100 metres high). It is one of Khurasan's key orographic and hydrographic complexes where its main rivers all rise and along which settlements were dotted, such as the Harirud of Herat, the Balkhab of Balkh, the Murghab of Merv, and Nishapur River.

Beyond the oases and rural settlements of the naturally watered heartlands of Khurasan lies harsh and dry terrain. The eastern Hindu Kush is a high-altitude desert, and to the north, open steppes and deserts run down through today's Turkmenistan to the Caspian Sea and the Oxus river basin.[36] To the south lies an extensive arid region of landlocked deserts and salt flats, such as the Dasht-i Kawir and Dasht-i Lut (Iran) which occupy an area of 400 × 250 kilometres and consist of salt basins that during the spring rains become liquid mud that could destroy caravans during sudden downpours. In the more southerly parts, the oases depended on wells and *qanat*s.[37]

There was, thus, considerable topographical diversity in Khurasan, while the adequate rainfall, perennial streams, and accessible wells that permitted a relatively flourishing agricultural and pastoral economy were concentrated in the more northerly mountain zone where the population was relatively dense. The Muslim conquerors – like the Sasanians before them – focused their efforts on these northern parts of Khurasan, with Marw, Nishapur, and Balkh forming key zones of military activity. The main east-west transport routes ran through the peripheral hills following the chains of oases, while north-south movement used relatively accessible passes in the Alburz and Turkmen-Khurasan mountains.[38] The Muslim conquerors followed the pre-existing routes, while the Muslim troops did not settle in the main cities they conquered, but preferred to camp at a safe distance in army cantonments that eventually became cities in their own rights. Thus, Baruqan, which lay 12 kilometres

(two *farsakh*s) from the old city and well outside the city walls, became the main Muslim cantonment site for Balkh. In order to consolidate and finance their colonies in Khurasan, the Muslims adopted pre-existing tax systems. This is evident from the Bactrian tax documents, which provide the first attested use of the term *kharaj* in AH 145/762–3 CE, a term that Geoffrey Khan suggests has a Middle Persian origin.[39] Incidentally, a pre-Islamic practice that was not continued by the Muslims was the building of walls. Archaeological findings and references in the Arab geographers' accounts of pre-Islamic walled forts and city walls being *kharab* and early Islamic cities spilling over the old walls indicate that the threat to these eastern oasis cities was no longer felt.[40] This would support Karimi's suggestion that economic gain, rather than territorial gain, was an overriding factor.

Another example of the adoption and adjustment of long-standing systems is the way in which the Muslims continued systems of water management in Khurasan. Water was the major source of wealth, prosperity, and power in the region and so also of rivalry. Contemporary sources devote extensive space to the availability of water and effectiveness of irrigation systems in Khurasani towns, which were the *sine qua non* for oasis life. In Marw, for example, the supervision and upkeep of the oasis' irrigation channels was the responsibility of a *mutawalli* or *muqassim al-ma'*, corresponding to the general Persian term for a local irrigation official, *mir-ab*. This person had an extensive staff to keep the channels in repair, and even a group of divers. A dam ran across the Murghab River above the city, and the supply of water from this store was regulated and measured by a metering device, called a *miqyas* – a wooden plank with intervals marked.[41]

In the local history of Balkh, *Fada'il-i Balkh*, a water management system is described in which local elders were assigned an individual canal to manage. Although the report is meant to refer to a pre-historical myth of the building of Balkh by Gushtasp together with his advisor Jamas, the account may well reflect a practice known to the author in his time (late twelfth century):

> They allocated a water channel to each sage, and there was a sage with each commander.
>
> And each of them built a village. Jamas said that this city should be founded according to the structure of the year … The city became so populous that one square *gaz*[42] of land sold for 100 *dirhams*.[43]

In Balkh, the slopes of the mountains to the south of the old city carried snowmelt into the metropolis through the Balkhab River. The *Hudud al-'alam* describes the 'large river in Balkh that comes from Bamiyan' (that is, the Balkhab), adding that in the vicinity of Balkh the river is divided into 12 branches that traverse the town and are used for rural agriculture.[44] The author of the *Fada'il-i Balkh* gives more specifics about the river's course and properties:

> The prosperity of this city was such that God Almighty – without human intervention – enabled delightful and pleasant waters to meander smoothly in surface streams. This was unlike [other] cities of Khurasan and other places where great industry is expended on digging subterraneous canals,[45] and where they must carry out many works. In some places they use heavy slabs [for collecting water]

> in order to generate [adequate] water flows above the surface.[46] The sources of the water of this city are sweet [freshwater] springs and pure stones, and its terminus lies in the desert lands of Balkh … This water has all the elements considered essential by the sages. First, it has a strong current, its source is far away, and the water pathway is pure. It is not contaminated by sulphur, alum, or salt, and it does not flow through putrid places.[47]

As a result, Balkh purportedly enjoyed, within just a few centuries of the Muslim conquest, the abundance of '500 thriving baths, 400 domed ice houses, 300 public water tanks, and 1,200 cold water cisterns in the city itself'.[48] While these figures must not be read too literally, the account illustrates that it was a feat of human engineering combined with the region's natural snowmelt that made Balkh a flourishing and abundant city filled with orchards, large green spaces and plenty of publicly available water. Indeed, any self-respecting city in the medieval Islamicate world needed to be able to lavish its pilgrims with the restorative and thirst-quenching powers of fresh water. This was particularly important for Balkh, which, due to it being sandwiched between mountains and the desert steppe to the north, experienced extreme climates of heat in the summer; and which hosted a large number of tombs of *shaykh*s and other pre-Islamic figures that needed to be visited.[49]

Other cities made similar use of snowmelt. Nishapur's water management system rendered this oasis city's gardens spectacularly rich in white currants and other fruits. Guy Le Strange summarises that numerous canals were led from the Wadi Saghawar and drove 70 mills, whence it passed near Nishapur city and provided the houses and garden below the city with an ample supply of water. Indeed, up until the eleventh century at least, the district of Nishapur was regarded as thickly populated and the most fertile in Khurasan.[50] On a somewhat smaller scale and further north, the area of Nasa (or Nisa) is said to have enjoyed the copiousness of fresh water which descended from the neighbouring hills, making this town verdant and very fertile.[51] Herat is described in the *Hudud al-ʿalam* as 'a large town' with running waters. The Harirud is alluded to as the river that is being utilised in the districts, presumably for consumption and agricultural purposes.[52] The *Hudud al-ʿalam* also describes the district of Gharchistan – on the north bank of the Murghab River, lying to the east of Herat and north of the Harirud – as a place that 'is all mountains', while producing much grain and possessing numerous fields. Similarly, Diza – a settlement of Marw al-Rudh – is described as a borough at the foot of a mountain through which the Marw River passes and which 'abounds in fruit'.[53]

By the same token, not all places with much cultivation were made prosperous by it. For example, the *Hudud al-ʿalam* states that Sakalkand, which had much cultivation, was 'a place of poor people'.[54] Indeed, living in a mountainous zone came with its complications, especially when situated on a fault line. That the region is earthquake-prone has been witnessed in more recent times, as well as in the medieval period. Whether the early Muslim conquerors knew of these earthquakes – and whether that would have deterred them from occupying Khurasan – remains unknown. But already in Dhu al-Hijja 203/819 Balkh was hit by a devastating earthquake that destroyed a quarter of the city and ruined the congregational mosque. Other places affected by this earthquake were Faryab (modern-day Maymana) and Taliqan and the districts of Juzjan in the west and Tukharistan in the east. The shock was also felt

in Marw and Transoxania, and aftershocks lasted for a long time.[55] Other disasters, such as drought, leprosy, and the plague befell the people of Khurasan, too, but these would not have been unique to this region only.[56]

It seems convincing that water and good climate would have provided a strong motivator to the early Muslims (and the Sasanians) to take Khurasan, not least because of the agricultural produce and financial revenue they brought. Khurasan's animals would also have made it attractive. References to Khurasan's fauna can be found in the medieval literary sources and zoomorphic images in medieval Islamic art.[57] The availability of animal food in this ecological environment would have been attractive. The flora and fauna in the steppes and semi-deserts supplied vegetable foods and a wide variety of rodent species, and the open ranges included many fast-moving animals that could travel great distances in search of water (for example, the wild horse, wild ass, and various species of antelope).[58] Another of the region's oldest species was the Bactrian camel, the exploitation of which for military and civilian transport purposes would have provided an incentive, too. Thus, for example, the new Umayyad governor of Khurasan, Saʿid Khudhayna, arrived in Khurasan in 102/720–1, riding a 'Bukhtiyya' camel, which is a species of camel of Turkmen or Bactrian breed.[59] Horses, too, were bred in Khurasan as the *Hudud al-ʿalam* highlights,[60] and feature regularly as beasts of burden used by the Arab conquerors and subsequent local rulers.[61]

The presence of herbivores in practically every natural zone in Khurasan made intensive hunting possible, for which special techniques and tools were developed.[62] The environment has proved also an important influence in the development of stockbreeding.[63] The dry steppes and semi-deserts are extremely favourable to stockbreeding of wild goat (ancestor of the domestic goat), the boar, wild bull, and buffalo. The dry steppes with their woody cereals and feather-grasses have major nutritional value and provide consistent grazing grounds for most of the year. The semi-deserts with saline soils and shrubby vegetation are also reliable grazing ground. Equally important today are the resources for the development of arable farming, such as the chief cereals on which humans feed – wheat, barley, and rice.[64]

In order to gain better insight into agricultural practices and rural economy in the area, examples can be drawn from the recently excavated environmental evidence from Marw.[65] This includes free-threshing wheat, hulled and naked barley, chickpeas, lentils, grass peas, cucumber or melon, grapes and plums from the Bronze Age (at Gonur Tepe), the addition of broomcorn millet in the Iron Age (at Tahirbaj Tepe), and various other cultivated cereals, fruits, and other plant remains at Göbeklydepe. In addition, the discovery of large quantities of accidentally carbonised cotton seeds in contexts dating from the fourth century onwards provides the earliest archaeobotanical evidence for cultivation of this fibre crop at Marw and contradicts the hypothesis that this was introduced as late as the ninth century. St John Simpson concludes that, already in Sasanian times:

> The results therefore imply a highly organised agricultural regime with efficient water and soil management practices which enabled the cultivation of a wide range of winter and summer crops, including the basis of an important fibre crop industry that minimised, if not averted, the risk of salinisation.[66]

These practices seem to have been continued into the Islamic period. By then, the district of Marw contained a number of large estates which brought their owners considerable revenue.[67] By the time the Arab geographers wrote in the ninth and tenth centuries, Marw was producing good cotton, the root of asafoetida, sweets, vinegar, condiments, textiles of raw silk, and *mulham* silk.[68] The Marw oasis enjoyed a highly developed system of exchanges, and numerous technical and agricultural methods of cultures were developed. The people cultivated the silkworm and produced fine cotton; the latter was, according to al-Istakhri, exported widely in raw and manufactured form.[69]

Moving eastwards to Balkh, in the tenth century the *Hudud al-ʿalam* knows it as, 'a large and flourishing town' with wonderfully decorated buildings called the Naw Bahar that have fallen into ruin,[70] and with a rural economy that produces citrons and sour oranges, sugar cane, and water-lilies.[71] If the documents from fourth – to eighth-century Tukharistan are factored in, then it becomes evident that Tukharistan's rural economy saw a continuous production of horses, sheep, grain, and various fruits in Rob and Samangan, some 130 kilometres from Balkh.[72] Moreover, the production of gold and silver from Khurasan's mountain mines highlighted in the *Hudud al-ʿalam* indicate a continuation (or redevelopment) of coin mints at Marw and Balkh by the early Islamic rulers.[73] The Tukharistan documents also show that even in a rural metropolis outside the urban conglomerations – in this case, sandwiched between the cities of Balkh and Bamiyan – a highly monetised economic and administrative system motored the economy.[74]

Another economic factor was Khurasan's semi-precious stones. Xuanzang, for example, who visited Balkh in the 630s (some 80 years before the final Muslim conquest), describes the jewels of Balkh's Buddhist Naw Bahar temple as the finest of all temples, which rendered the temple the frequent target for thievery and crime by 'marauding hordes'. Presumably, these jewels were extracted locally from the mines mentioned by the Arab geographers. Whether the earliest Muslims in Khurasan knew about Khurasan's minerals we do not know, but an account in the late tenth-century *Fadaʾil-i Balkh* appears in a section that, although undated, appears to stem from a late eighth-/early ninth-century source:[75]

> Another point is that this land is full of resources. Near it, are deposits of pure and fine silver and gold, some coming from the mountains and others from the water [beds]. Badakhshan is on one side and is world famous. The mountains of Balkh have a limitless supply of copper, sulphur, lead, salt and timber.[76]

Certainly, by the tenth–twelfth centuries minerals are the subject of much literary celebration. We read that in the mountainous region of the Kuh-i Baba range surrounding Balkh, as well as its eastern dependency in Badakhshan[77] near the Pamirs, important metals and dazzling and rare semi-precious stones including the balas ruby and the azure lapis lazuli, were extracted and sold for domestic use and traded abroad.[78]

Many of Khurasan's natural resources were traded in markets before the Muslims conquered Khurasan. The Bactrian documents from Tukharistan, for example, mention a number of markets in the Samangan and Amber regions in the seventh century.[79] Indeed, centrally located in every Khurasani city – large and small – was the *bazaar* which had its origin in the late Sasanian period at the latest.[80] It would

appear, then, that the bazaars of ninth- and tenth-century Khurasan described by the Arab geographers have a pre-Islamic precedent. In Nishapur, the best-known market places were the large *murabbaʿa* (near the Friday Mosque) and the small *murabbaʿa*. There were some 50 important business streets in which all kinds of wares were on sale, and they ran across the city in straight lines intersecting at right angles.[81] Marw in the *Hudud al-ʿalam*, although no longer an important provincial centre (having served as the Khurasani hub of the Sasanians, Umayyads, and Abbasids), still had a good market.[82] Herat's bazaar also features in Fami Harawi's history of the city. It was set ablaze one night in AH 472/1079–80 CE by the gate of the Jamiʿ mosque, destroying many shops (*dukan*).[83]

Thus, it would appear that Khurasanis both before and after the Muslim conquests were active traders along the roads that became known as 'the great Khurasan highway'. Khurasan had busy overland trade routes running east-west and between the Caspian Sea at Gurgan to the upper Oxus near Badakhshan and the Wakhan corridor in northeast Afghanistan, near the modern Chinese border. Thus, Khurasani trade moved not only east-west, but also north-south. This meant that some nodal points were also crossing-points along both axes; Balkh, for example, was a crossing point for routes between India and Transoxania, as well as Iran and China.[84] The consequent variety of goods at Balkh's bazaars is described in the *Fadaʾil-i Balkh*:[85]

> Furthermore, caravans would arrive each year, one after the other, from Hindustan. Traders would bring fine aromatic roots, fragrances such as aloes-wood, camphor and suchlike; delicious sweet things, such as sugar and sugar-candy; a multitude of precious goods of unlimited value; pretty slave girls and white slave boys from Turkistan;[86] Tamghaji silver coins;[87] Farghana silk;[88] round precious stones, and many jewels that require no further explanation.

Like the 'Silk Road' metaphor, the 'great Khurasan highway' should not be imagined as a continuous 'highway' travelled by one single merchant or caravan from beginning to end. Such a journey would have taken too long to complete on horse or camel back and medieval roads, and would be hardly financially sustainable. Rather, traders' enterprises were small and medium in range, with travel days of weeks and months, and exchanges at nodal points in a chain of transmission of goods, as well as ideas. In Marw, for example, recent archaeological research has led to the conclusion that the city and its oasis, 'were well connected with adjacent regions but not reliant on long-distance trade or the popular model of the Silk Road'. Charting the trade routes in the region would produce maps that illustrate a criss-cross pattern of lines threading their way along the mountain systems that frame the Iranian plateau, rather than one thick line.[89] They would be dotted with staging posts at which caravanserais provided accommodation for travellers. The caravanserai in the Altin-tepa of Bactria, for example, is situated on ancient caravan routes that have been dated back to Achaemenid times (sixth to fourth centuries BCE).[90]

All this wealth needed to be tapped by the Umayyad and early Abbasid caliphal governments. By all accounts, Khurasan's tax contribution constituted the second-largest fiscal income to the early Abbasid treasury (after the Sawad of Iraq). Some tax data can be gleaned from the accounts of al-Yaʿqubi and Ibn Khurradadbih. Al-Yaʿqubi worked in Khurasan under the Tahirids, and would presumably have

had access to official tax figures. He listed tax amounts by towns within provinces, which allows us to compare the relative importance of each in fiscal terms. According to him, Nishapur alone accounted for 10 per cent of Khurasan's tax share to the caliphal coffers. The region and its many districts (including Tus, Quhistan, Nisa and Zuzan) are said to have contributed a *kharaj* of four million dirhams as part of Khurasan's total *kharaj* of 44 million dirhams.[91] In comparison, the highly fertile region of Gurgan, which lies at the western end of the 'Great Khurasan Highway', and was not part of the administrative province of Khurasan at this time, contributed ten million dirhams.[92]

The route which al-Yaʿqubi followed led from Nishapur to Sarakhs, six days' journey away. He described Sarakhs as an important country situated within a desert that had no running water and where people had to collect water from wells.[93] The tax revenue from Sarakhs was still a respectable one million dirhams. Marw, in turn, lay six days' walk through desert lands from Sarakhs. Marw and Herat, according to al-Yaʿqubi, were the most important and prosperous parts of Khurasan respectively, with flowing springs and channels that provided water to the population. Their taxes (the figures are not specified) were incorporated in the province's total contribution of 44 million dirhams, too.[94] In light of these impressive revenues, it would be difficult to imagine that financial gain from Khurasan's ecology and economy did not provide a major impetus for the Islamic conquests and early Islamic rule.

Similar relative data with a few more details can be gleaned from another text, Ibn Khurradadbih's *al-Masalik al-mamalik*. The author was born in Khurasan and was a Zoroastrian convert to Islam who grew up in Baghdad in relative comfort, and made a career in the Abbasid administration as head of the postal and intelligence service (*barid*). His surviving work – despite the questions surrounding its dating and authenticity – stands out for its detailed travel itineraries and mid-ninth century fiscal data.[95] The taxes of the Sawad in Iraq on the eve of the conquests, in *c*. 600 CE, are said to have totalled 600 million dirhams *mithqal*.[96] Ibn Khurradadbih provides a list of taxes collected from Khurasan two centuries later by ʿAbd Allah b. Tahir in 211–12/826–7,[97] the Tahirid ruler based in Nishapur and governing over Khurasan and Ma waraʿ al-nahr (Transoxiana) as a vassal of the Abbasids. The total tax income from Khurasan is given as 44.8 million dirhams, plus 13 mounted beasts, a booty of 2,000 sheep, 2,000 Ghuzz slaves,[98] valued at 600,000 dirhams, and 2,487 pieces of Kandaji (?) cloth, and an item made of metal including silver. In comparison, the total *kharaj* from Transoxania was only a small fraction with 2.2 million dirhams.[99]

However, these texts are a bit late for our purposes. If we want to understand how the seventh- and eighth-century tax regime worked on the ground, the Bactrian documents can be instructive, albeit limited to one extended family living in the area of Rob and Samangan between Balkh and Bamiyan. The documents date from a time when the son of the Abbasid caliph, al-Mahdi (r. AH 158-69/775–85 CE), was the governor of Khurasan, based out of Rayy.[100] Twenty-three tax receipts dated between the years AH 138/755 CE and AH 160/777 CE refer to seven different types of taxes collected during that 22-year period. These include a supplemental tax exacted for 'al-Mahdi's sustenance'.[101] Much of the tax is levied on agricultural revenue. A land surveyor's report distinguishes between two types of land: 'land' (Ar. *ard*) and uncultivated orchards (Ar. *al-kurum al-ghamara*).[102] The lands owned by landowning

families produced raw goods, such as wheat and onions. Livestock included oxen and sheep, as well as horses, donkeys, and mules.[103] The use of slaves is also evident.[104] The corpus cannot tell us the relative tax rates or allow us to assess their impact upon the wealth of Khurasani landholders or the provincial treasury. But they do indicate a consistent tax regime carried out by the early Abbasid *ʿummal* who served in this region. The tax collectors served only for short periods of time during the 22-year period – an indication that the Abbasid administrators were probably not settled long term in the region, and had little interest there beyond collecting taxes.[105]

Taxes were the bane of all Khurasanis, it would appear. The defence of Khurasanis against the extortionate rates imposed by the caliphate in Baghdad becomes a common trope in the local histories from Khurasan, which were written at a time when rulers increasingly claimed eastern Persian or Turkic origins (rather than 'Arab' ones). This is exemplified in an account in the *Fadaʾil-i Balkh* on the Banijurid *khatun* who administered Balkh while her husband, Dawud b. ʿAbbas (d. 259/872),[106] was preoccupied with the construction of a pleasure palace for himself. The author emphasises the precept that rulers ensure the just levying of taxes – a common theme in medieval Islamic 'mirrors for princes'.[107] But tax burdens were also high in Sasanian and Hephthalite times, as the Bactrian documents attest. It is not possible to make conclusive statements on the trends in taxation volume, that is, whether the burdens were heightened or lessened with the arrival of the Muslims.[108] What can be said is that agricultural revenues were high enough to sustain an active tax collection system which would ultimately benefit the Sasanian and then the early caliphal treasuries of the seventh and eighth centuries.

CONCLUSION

The evidence base defies any meaningful quantification over time and across the many polities and networks in Khurasan. However, it does indicate a strong level of continuity in ecologically influenced economic practices and exchanges in Khurasan between the late Sasanian and early Islamic period (Umayyad and early Abbasid) in the seventh and eighth centuries. The well-attested engagement of *dihqan*s and other *mawali* in the early Islamic caliphal administration would make it plausible to conjecture that these 'locals' acted as the main continuators of pre-existing practices. They ensured the continuation – or possibly, a boosting – of production and trade levels. The conquest of Khurasan and perpetuation of fiscal and social practices during the period of early Islamicate rule in the seventh and eighth centuries, rather than innovation, appears to support the notion that the early Muslims were motivated at least to a significant degree by pragmatic and financial considerations, and not merely by ideological or religious fervour.

This chapter's discussion of economic motivations, with a close-up view of the ecological factors that nourished them, has added an often-overlooked dimension in the studies of Islamic conquest and early Islamic rule in Khurasan. While the age-old assumption that conversion lay at the heart of the Arab conquests or early Islamic rule has been superseded by serious scholarship for some time now, the alternative explanations are yet to be articulated in more depth on Khurasan, in particular, using sound evidence and scientific methods.

It is hoped that this chapter has provided some fruitful ideas on at least three areas that merit more in-depth research: the use of water is the first. Water is crucial to understanding motivations for Arab armies to venture into more desert and steppe lands and oasis states. Without water, there is no life. Second priority, then, is the use of land, flora, and fauna that flourish thanks to the presence of the water. The third element in this scenario is the use of fiscal policies and money markets to reap the revenues from the primary resources produced in the cities and their countryside. These would necessarily have to be both complex and effective control mechanisms, given their reach from the caliphal centre to the towns and villages in as vast, remote and socially, ethnically, and culturally diverse a region as Khurasan. Inquiry into the questions of conquest and control inevitably need to take into account the reality of human greed and the effects of power, and the use of business and money to satisfy the first and motor the second.

NOTES

1 Daryaee 2002: 9, 78.
2 The composition date is contested but it has been dated by Robert Thomson from the fifth to the eighth century: Agathangelos and Thomson 1976: xv.
3 Marquart 1901: 5–6, 16–17. Marquart says he uses the Nestorian Bishops' lists rather than 'official lists'. He lists four parts of Eranshahr, the West (including Sakastan), the South, the East and the North, which comprise 26 provinces.
4 Al-Yaʿqubi's *Tarikh*, cited in *EI2*, 'Khurasan' (C.E. Bosworth).
5 New archaeological data from the active site of Mes Aynak, south of the Hindukush may shed more light on the situation of this south-eastern part of Khurasan: Massoudi 2011.
6 The latter regions broke off shortly thereafter, and were only integrated into the Islamicate world during the Ghaznavid conquests of the eleventh century: Le Strange 1930 [1905]: 334–51. Khurasan's borders were not fixed in later centuries either. For a fuller study of the changing limits of Khurasan, see Noelle-Karimi 2008: 9–19.
7 Pourshariati 2008: 265ff.
8 The term 'Greater Khurasan', sometimes used in the secondary literature, is not attested in medieval texts as far as I can tell. It was used as recently as in Rante 2015. The toponym of 'Khurasan' remains in use today to denote a much smaller province in eastern Iran.
9 Al-Muqaddasi 1906: 18.
10 By the late tenth century, al-Muqaddasi divided Khurasan in a different way: into nine districts (*kawr*) and eight sections (*nawah*), some of which were not included by his predecessors in Khurasan. Muqaddasi's districts are: Balkh, Ghaznin, Bust, Sistan, Herat, Juzjanan, Marw, Nishapur, Quhistan. The sections are: Bushanj, Badhghis, Gharchistan, Marw al-Rudh, Tukharistan, Bamiyan, Kanj Rustaq, and Isfizar. Muqaddasi 1906: 295.
11 Le Strange 1930 [1905]: 420–3; al-Yaʿqubi 1860: 117. Also: al-Istakhri 1927: 275–6; Ibn Hawqal 1873: II/2, 447.
12 The oldest Persian poems are subsumed under the term, 'Khurāsānī style,' no matter where they were written. See, for example, Mahjub 1345/1966–67.
13 Chabbi 1977: 5–72.
14 Perry 2009; Melchert 2015: 13–30; Madelung 1982: 32–9.
15 Noelle-Karimi 2008: 12; Hill 2000: 264.
16 Al-Tabari 1879–1901: II, 1181, 1206–07, 1219; al-Waʿiz al-Balkhi (in press); al-Waʿiz al-Balkhi 1350/1971: 34. Étienne de la Vaissière has recently argued that, 'the title barmak derives directly from *paramaka*, a title that broadly means "excellent" or "superior", without any need to go to the more distant *paramaka* [that is an important figure in the monastic hierarchy, as attested in Khotanese texts]'. De la Vaissière 2010: 531.

17 Kennedy 1990: 89–98; Bosworth 1994: 268–82.
18 Noelle-Karimi 2008: 12.
19 Morony 2017: 1; also Morony 1993: 699–720; Morony 2001–2: 25–37; Morony 2004: 161–79. Archaeological methods can help in filling some of the gaps. See, for example, Kennet 2004; 2008.
20 The term 'Islamic Khurasan' should not be understood as referring to the religious persuasion of Khurasanis, many of whom at this time had not yet converted to Islam. Rather, the term refers to the Islamic caliphate that ruled over Khurasan from the early eighth century onwards. The subsequent polity that emerged was what Hodgson coined as Islamdom: Hodgson 1974: 57–60.
21 Hodgson 1974: 57–60.
22 It is worth noting that sites themselves can also be commercial enterprises in their own right. Thus, a pilgrimage site creates its own economy through the collection of sizeable charitable contributions. See Green 2014.
23 For a detailed discussion, see Lambton 1991; Paul 1996; 2016.
24 Al-Yaʿqubi 1892 [1860]: 231–4; Ibn Khurradadbih 1889: 3–183; Ibn al-Faqih 1967 and 1987; al-Istakhri 1927; al-Masʿudi 1893–94; Ibn Hawqal 1873; al-Muqaddasi 1906; *Hudud al-'alam* 1383/2004–05.
25 Al-Baladhuri 1866; al-Tabari 1879–1901; Balʿami 1353/1974; Gardizi 1347/1968; Bayhaqi 1383/2004–05.
26 Al-Waʿiz al-Balkhi 1350/1971; *Tarikh-i Sistan* 1994. For an analysis of the former text, see Azad 2012.
27 Ibn Funduq 1966. For a brief analysis, see Pourshariati 2000.
28 Fami Harawi 1387/2008. For a brief analysis of the text, see Peacock 2015.
29 Khurasan provided an identity for many other historical writers in the region as we can see from the colourful set of surviving local and regional histories. C.A. Storey and Yuri Bregel's bibliographies of Persian literature list local and regional histories of Bayhaq, Bukhara, Khurasan, Marw, Nishapur, and Samarqand. Medieval local history-writing is not limited to Khurasan, but grew in cities and regions throughout the Islamic world. Storey 1927–52: I/1, 348–93; I/2, 1291–1302; Storey and Bregel 1972: II, 1008–1208. Also: Lambton 1991: 227–38; Paul 1993: 69–92; Melville 2000: 9–11; Pourshariati 2000: 133–64; Paul 2000: 93–115, 117–32. Peacock 2015: 144; Savant 2013: 9–11, 233–4.
30 The Bactrian language belongs to the Iranian language family, and uses cursive Greek script. The total number of Bactrian and Arabic language documents is 163 and 32 respectively. 47 of the dated documents belong to the early Islamic period, and of this group, 32 are written in Arabic and 15 in Bactrian. Azad 2016: 36.
31 Barthold 1992 [1928]; Le Strange 1930 [1905].
32 See, for example, *EI2* 'Harat' (R. Frye); *EI2* 'Balkh' (R. Frye); *EI2* 'Khurasan' (C.E. Bosworth); *EI2* 'Nishapur' (C.E. Bosworth); *EI2* 'Marw al-Rudh' (C.E. Bosworth); *EI2* 'Marw al-Shahidjan' (C.E. Bosworth and A.Yu. Yakubovskii); *EI3* 'Balkh' (J. Paul).
33 Masson 1992: 29–44; Fisher 1968: 1–110; Adamec 1972–85. For a listing of other sources, see Bregel 1995: III, 1856–70, 1882–84 (on historical geography); much of vol. II (on travel descriptions, ethnography, folklore).
34 A notable exception to this rule is: Minorsky 1994: 293–8.
35 Also important are the numismatic studies, but these remain of limited us to a study of the economy as we do not have sufficient evidence of the rate of minting versus the rate of loss. Numismatic studies include Lowick 1983 and 1985; Hebert 1966; Balog 1970; Schwarz 2002; Treadwell 2008 and 2012.
36 *EI2*, 'Khurasan' (C.E. Bosworth) and 'Kuh-i Baba' (C.E. Bosworth); Masson 1992: 36.
37 *EI2*, 'Khurasan' (C.E. Bosworth).
38 *EI2*, 'Khurasan' (C.E. Bosworth).

39 Khan *c.* 2007: 33, 43–5.
40 For examples of the development of Iranian cities in the early Islamic period, see Kennedy 2006.
41 *EI2*, 'Marw al-Shahidjan' (A. Yu. Yakubovskii and C.E. Bosworth) citing Ibn Hawqal and al-Muqaddasi; and *EI2* 'Mā' – vi. Irrigation in Persia' (A.K.S. Lambton) on the *mir-ab*.
42 A *gaz* is the Persian ell, of varying lengths. Hinze 1955: 64.
43 Al-Waʿiz al-Balkhi (in press); 1350/1971: 16–17.
44 *Hudud al-ʿalam* 1937: 108.
45 Read *kariz*.
46 The tenth-century geographers Istakhri (1927: 278) and Ibn Hawqal (1873: 488) call the River of Balkh (known as Balkhab today) the *Dah-as* (Ten Mills) River, because a total of ten mills were driven by its waters—a testament to its strong current. See *E.Ir*, 'Balkab' (D. Balland).
47 Al-Waʿiz al-Balkhi (in press); 1350/1971: 48–9. Still today the Balkhab has a regime typical of snow-fed mountain rivers with high waters in May and June when the snow melts and flows over the Alborz mountains down a tributary into the Balkh plain. See *E.Ir*, 'Balkab' (D. Balland). In the early modern period, the irrigation system seems to have been extended to 18 canals when it was known as *hajdah-nahr* ('18 canals').
48 Al-Waʿiz al-Balkhi (in press); 1350/1971: 21.
49 Azad 2013.
50 Le Strange 1930 [1905] 193: 384ff.
51 The area of Nasa was situated in the cultivated zone which lies north of the range separating Khurasan from the Turkoman steppes, near the modern Turkmenistan capital of Ashqabad. See *EI2*, 'Nasa' (V. Minorsky and C.E. Bosworth).
52 *Hudud al-ʿalam* 1937: 104.
53 *Hudud al-ʿalam* 1937: 105.
54 *Hudud al-ʿalam* 1937: 109. That is, if we accept Minorsky's translation of *darwishan*, as one solely alluding to poverty, rather than perhaps religious piety.
55 Ambraseys and Melville 1982: 37.
56 Fami Harawi, for example, mentions a drought that struck Herat in AH 288/900–1 CE. Fami Harawi 1387/2008: 117. Shaykh al-Islam al-Waʿiz al-Balkhi (1350/1971: 72) mentions that the *shaykh* ʿAtaʾ b. Abi Sayib died in Balkh 'during the misfortunate plague' (he contradicts himself with a statement earlier claiming that Balkh was free of leprosy and plague [1971: 49]).
57 See also al-Jahiz 1998. For an appreciation of the many zoological treatises and medieval Arabic books on animal medicine, see Sezgin 1970: III, 357–80; *EI2*, 'Hayawan' (Pertev Naili Boratav).
58 Masson 1992: 38.
59 Al-Tabari 1989: 149 (translation); Lane-Poole 1863–93: pt. I, 158.
60 *Hudud al-'alam* 1937: 102.
61 Al-Waʿiz al-Balkhi (in press); 1350/1971: 33, 116ff.
62 See *EI2*, 'Sayd' (F. Viré).
63 Masson 1992: 39.
64 Masson 1992: 39–40.
65 For further details on the archaeology of Marw: Herrmann 1999; Simpson 2014.
66 Simpson 2014: 15.
67 *EI2*, 'Marw al-Shahidjan' (A. Yu. Yakubovskii and C.E. Bosworth).
68 Simpson 2014: 105.
69 *EI2*, 'Marw al-Shahidjan' (A. Yu. Yakubovskii and C.E. Bosworth).
70 This is the only reference to paintings we have on the Naw Bahar which although called a Sasanian royal building is better known as a Buddhist temple and monastery from Chinese

accounts. *Hudud al-ʿalam* 1937: 108; Xuanzang 2004 [1884]: 44–8. On the archaeology of Balkh, see Foucher 1942–47; Besenval and Marquis 2007: 1847–74.

71 Le Strange 1930 [1905]: 420–1.

72 *Hudud al-ʾalam* 1937: 108.

73 See, for example, Schwarz 2002; Balog 1970. The mines also provide the source of Khurasani metalwork – see Taragan 2005.

74 Sims-Williams 2012; Khan *c.* 2007; Azad 2016.

75 On the sources and authoring of the *Fadaʾil-i Balkh*, see Azad 2012.

76 Al-Waʿiz al-Balkhi (in press); 1350/1971: 48.

77 Badakhshan is a mountainous region situated on the left bank of the upper reaches of the Oxus. The adjective derived from this noun is *badakhshi* or *balakhshi*, referring to a type of ruby apparently only found there. The *lal-i Badakhshan* was famous in the author's time and it is surprising he does not mention it. It has mines of silver, gold, garnets (*bijadha*) and lapis lazuli. 'Musk is imported here from Tibet', writes the anonymous author of *Hudud al-ʿalam*, who does not link it to Balkh. *Hudud al-ʿalam* 1937: 112.

78 Le Strange 1930 [1905]: 436; al-Waʿiz al-Balkhi 1350/1971: 47.

79 Sims-Williams 2012: 84–7, 96–7. Specifically, traders were engaged in the sale of a slave boy at Marogan market in Samangan (Bactrian Document 'P', dated 446 in the Era of the Bactrian Documents, EBD which starts in CE 223, equivalent of 669 CE) and signed loan agreement at the market town of Amber (Bactrian Document "Ss," dated 476 EBD/ 699 CE). Sims-Williams 2012: 84–7, 96–7.

80 Daryaee 2010: 403–4. Daryaee cites the Denkard ('Acts of the Religion'), a ninth-century Pahlavi encyclopaedia of Zoroastrian knowledge.

81 Le Strange 1930 [1905]: 429–30.

82 *Hudud al-ʿalam* 1937: 105.

83 Fami Harawi 1387/2008: 127.

84 Al-Waʿiz al-Balkhi (in press); 1350/1971: 17, 47. The ceramic and coin finds from medieval Balkh have not yet corroborated these statements in the chronicles, but this is largely a function of the limited coverage from the old city.

85 Al-Waʿiz al-Balkhi 1350/1971: 47–8.

86 On the countries of the Jaxartes 'where the chief industry of the merchants was the slave trade', see Le Strange 1930 [1905]: 487.

87 Read *sawm-ha-yi tamghaj-i*. The author may be referring to the coins minted by Ibrahim Tamghaj Khan, the former Böri Tigin (*c.* AH 444–60/1052–68 CE), the Qarakhanid ruler of Khurasan (in which the Uighur script was used together with Arabic). Fedorov 2003: 262.

88 In the medieval and early modern periods, silk was among the most important commodities of trade in the Islamic world. *EI*2, 'Harir' (H. İnalcik et al.); *EI*2, 'Farghana' (V. Barthold and [B. Spuler]).

89 See, for example, Brice 1993 [1981]: 24. C.E. Bosworth acted as consultant to the map.

90 Medieval caravan structures of the eleventh–twelfth century in the area of Aqcha Qalʿa in the Qaraqum desert on the road between Merv and Amul reveal a double-courtyard caravanserai with arcades and four iwans in each, but only one entrance. This structure may have had the function of a 'travel residence', archaeologist Wolfram Kleiss suggest. Williams and Wordsworth 2008–9. Kleiss 1996: 107–8.

91 In early Islamic times, *kharaj* was the basic term for 'land tax' (or tribute) that was paid by the non-Muslims in the conquered lands; the Muslims there paid *ʿushr* on their land. The term is also sometimes referred to as a tax in general terms. Recent research has established that Bactrian document 'Arabic 1' dated AH 147/764–5 CE provides the first-known attestation of *kharaj* in any known Islamic document. It would appear that there was no separation between the *jizya* and *kharaj* in this period and that they were paid as a combined assessment, rather than separately as poll and land tax respectively (probably a

later development in Islamic law). See Løkkegaard 1978 [1950]; Khan *c.* 2007: 33; Azad 2016: 46 and n. 5. Also, von Sivers 1982.

92 Al-Yaʿqubi 1860: 277–8. Ibn Isfandiyar (*c.* AH 613/1216–17 CE), on the other hand, lists a Tahirid-era revenue in the Caspian region of Tabaristan of 6,003,000 dirhams, in addition to the production by three classes of cultivated lands (*diyaʾ*) of 7,000,900 dirhams, totaling an income of 13,300,000 dirhams. Ibn Isfandiyar 1905: 29.

93 *EI2*, 'Khurasan' (C.E. Bosworth): 279.

94 *EI2*, 'Khurasan' (C.E. Bosworth): 279–80.

95 *EI2*, 'Ibn Khurradadhbih' (M. Hadj-Sadok).

96 The editor, de Goeje, tells us that the *mithqal* was valued at 1 and 3/7 dirhams at this time. Ibn Khurradadbih 1889: 12, 15.

97 Ibn Khurradadbih 1889: 34–9.

98 Read *sabi*. Lane-Poole 1863–93, I, 1303.

99 De Goeje notes that this figure is less than a sum of all sub-totals given in the list which is 49.7 million dirhams. Ibn Khurradadbih 1889: 28, n. 1.

100 *EI2*, 'al-Mahdi' (H. Kennedy).

101 For details, see Azad 2016: 46ff. On the supplemental tax, see Document Ar. 3 dated AH 148 /765 CE in Khan *c.* 2007: 96.

102 Ar. 24 dated AH 154/771–2 CE. See facs. and tr. in Khan *c.* 2007: 138–40.

103 There is no mention of camels, but wine produced in vineyards is mentioned in the Bactrian language documents. BT I U, dated 490 of the Bactrian era, which corresponds to 713 CE. For a more detailed study of the area's economy (based on the Bactrian language documents only), see Rezakhani 2010a. Wine production seems to have continued into the tenth century when the *Hudud al-ʿalam* reports Samangan's production of good wine (*nabidh*): *Hudud al-ʿalam* 1937: 109.

104 For details, see Azad 2016: 40.

105 In the 22 years covered in Ar. 1–32 there were at least 19 different senior Abbasid administrators exacting the taxes in this relatively small region.

106 Dawud b. ʿAbbas (d. AH 259/872 CE) is the son of ʿAbbas b. Hashim, and was *wali* of Balkh in AH 233–58/847–72 CE. He was temporarily driven out of Balkh by the Saffarid Yaʿqub b. al-Layth in AH 258/872 CE, and fled to Samarqand in Samanid territory. He returned to Balkh shortly afterwards, and died there in AH 259/873 CE. Barthold 1992 [1928]: 77–8.

107 *EI2*, 'Kharadj – II. In Persia' (A.K.S. Lambton).

108 Sims-Williams 2012: 48–9, 164; also Azad 2016: 47.

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PART IV

PILGRIMAGE IN MECCA AND JERUSALEM

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CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

THE TRANSITION FROM LATE ANTIQUITY TO EARLY ISLAM IN WESTERN ARABIA

Harry Munt

The transition from Late Antiquity to the early Islamic period in the Middle East – or, as many would now prefer, from pre-Islamic to Islamic Late Antiquity[1] – is now very well studied. Advances over the last half a century or so in our understanding of early Islamic history have led many historians to think more carefully about the necessity of constructing a heuristically meaningful period of Late Antiquity that emphasises the developments (both continuities and transformations) that enveloped the formation of the first Islamic empire. We now even have a whole book, in Garth Fowden's *Before and After Muhammad*, dedicated to the question of the key continuities and transformations over the first millennium CE and how we might build a meaningful periodisation around them.[2] In one sense, reading much of this material on periodisation and Late Antiquity, it is easy to start feeling a little disconsolate. Understandings of what Late Antiquity is or should be can vary very widely, often depending on whether the researcher in question works on the western or eastern Mediterranean, or indeed the Sasanian world, or whether he or she is a political historian, or an economic or cultural or intellectual one.[3] Some studies even argue for a plurality of heuristically meaningful late antiquities.[4] If we compare, to use just two well-known examples, Peter Brown's Late Antiquity from the reign of Marcus Aurelius (r. 161–80) to the early Abbasid period with Andrea Giardina's insistence on a much shorter period, we are faced to some extent with a quandary: neither Brown nor Giardina is wrong, they are just using different criteria.[5]

All of this historical debate is, of course, a good thing and it is clear that the general broadening of Late Antiquity's remit to include the first Islamic century or two has been an important leap forward in the modern study of early Islamic history.[6] That the Umayyad caliphate matured within the world of Late Antiquity is now generally accepted as an important starting point for research into early Islamic political culture,[7] and the significance of the late antique context has been underscored in a number of recent studies of early Islamic urban, administrative and cultural history.[8] At the same time, however, we should consider the implications of the fact that, while the early Islamic caliphate certainly matured within the world of Late Antiquity, it is less clear that the very first Muslim community was born quite as fully within that same world.

While Umayyad political culture may have developed within the world of Late Antiquity, the caliph was clearly never simply a Roman emperor or Sasanian shah under a different name. What distinctiveness there was may owe much to the Islamic empire's Arabian origins. As the late Patricia Crone put it with customary sharpness back in 1980: 'The Arabs escaped absorption into the cultures of their subjects because morally they stayed in Mecca.'[9] The implication here is that Meccan culture – or western Arabian culture more broadly perhaps – was fundamentally different from that of the conquered lands outside the Arabian Peninsula. More recently, the overwhelming trend in scholarship on the emergence of Islam, especially but by no means exclusively within Qurʾanic studies, has been to try to bring late pre-Islamic western Arabia more fully within the orbit of the late antique world.[10] However, in spite of these important contributions to our understanding of Islamic origins, many historians – even those generally committed to studying early Islamic history within a broader late antique context – have found it necessary to separate to some degree the context of the birth of Islam in western Arabia from that of the establishment and consolidation of the Islamic empire outside the peninsula: 'Islamic political culture originated on the remote margins of the Roman and Iranian late antique Near East but developed at its centre.'[11]

Into this arena then came Aziz al-Azmeh's weighty 2014 study, *The Emergence of Islam in Late Antiquity: Allāh and His People*. Al-Azmeh offers here a detailed justification of one fairly commonly encountered understanding of the heuristic value of Late Antiquity as a meaningful period, that it was an age of 'oecumenical empire with the salvific vocation of a monotheist religion'.[12] How does the Hijaz, the region of western Arabia about which most of his lengthy book deals, fit into this paradigm? The answer is poorly:

> Western Arabia of *c.* 600 was an anachronism. In terms of religious history, it was not contemporary with surrounding territories between which it was wedged. It was a pagan reservation that had been largely passed over by developments occurring elsewhere, and was in a real sense historically retarded with respect to surrounding areas, retardation being understood in terms of the historical dynamics of *Verzeitlichung*, temporalisation, and shorn of its normative connotation.[13]

Slightly later in the book, al-Azmeh reiterates the point:

> To the system of inner-Arabian articulation, therefore, the Ḥijāz…, or more accurately central Ḥijāz, was a relative newcomer, a matter well reflected in an incidence of foreign, imperial religions so scant as to allow us to consider the region as a fiercely conservative polytheistic reservation, persisting until swept away by Paleo-Islam which, on this score alone, could be considered as a movement of acculturation into Late Antiquity.[14]

This notion of the Hijaz's post-Muhammad 'acculturation into Late Antiquity' is one that goes somewhat against the grain of much recent scholarship and deserves more attention. In the rest of this chapter, we will stick to the analysis of Late Antiquity based on al-Azmeh's two suggested themes – imperial monotheism and ecumenical

empire – and look at the Hijaz's position within the pre-Islamic late antique world, before moving onto a study of the changes brought to western Arabian culture and society during the Umayyad period.

THE PRE-ISLAMIC HIJAZ AND THE WORLD OF LATE ANTIQUITY

In a chapter published in 2012, Robert Hoyland outlined the two most common approaches encountered in much modern scholarship on Islamic origins: on the one hand, the approach that sees Islam as 'born of Late Antiquity' and, on the other, that which sees it as coming 'out of Arabia'. More recently, a third option has gained ground in the historiography (in which Hoyland's work has played a significant part): that Islam emerged in Arabia, but that Arabia was already part of the late antique world by the time of Muhammad's career.[15] It would seem, therefore, that Aziz al-Azmeh's strongly-put argument that Islam arose in a 'pagan reservation that had been largely passed over by developments occurring elsewhere' goes substantially against an emerging consensus. Is he right? Is there actually good evidence that the late pre-Islamic Hijaz was the anachronism he rather combatively suggests?

In some ways, *The Emergence of Islam in Late Antiquity* is a problematic book. You cannot write 400 pages on the late pre- and very early Islamic Hijaz without centring the discussion around the Arabic sources written perhaps only from the mid-eighth century onwards and mostly preserved only in ninth-century or later redactions. Al-Azmeh has written a separate book arguing for the utility of such sources in studying pre- and early Islamic Arabian history,[16] but his approach in either book is unlikely to convince those who tend to see the view of pre-Islamic Arabia in these sources not as the result of simple antiquarianism, but as reflecting a range of later concerns.[17] Attention to material evidence can be found in al-Azmeh's *Emergence of Islam in Late Antiquity*, but the Hijazi 'pagan reservation' remains largely that of Ibn al-Kalbi (d. *c.* 819), Ibn Habib (d. 859), Abu l-Faraj al-Isfahani (d. 967) and others.[18]

That said, there is still a valid point here: we may not have much contemporary evidence for rampant polytheism in the sixth- and early seventh-century Hijaz, but nor do we have much for diffusing monotheism anywhere particularly near Mecca, or even Medina, in that period. We have solid evidence for the presence of Christians in the seventh century in eastern Arabia and at least by the sixth century in South Arabia, but not much further north than Najran, close to four hundred miles southeast of Mecca.[19] Contemporary evidence for Judaism in sixth-century South Arabia extends no further north.[20] We also have decent contemporary evidence for Jewish communities in several oases of the northern Hijaz, particularly al-Hijr/Hegra/Madaʾin Salih and Dedan/al-ʿUla, in the fourth century, but these sites are no closer than about 160 miles northwest of Medina.[21] Thriving Jewish communities contemporary with Muhammad's career are famously attested elsewhere in the Hijaz, including in centres such as Khaybar and Medina, although as one detailed recent study has demonstrated there is little evidence for these communities outside of the later Arabic sources.[22] Some studies have also made the case, slightly more fancifully given an even poorer state of actual evidence than for the preceding examples, that the late pre-Islamic

Hijaz may have been home to a Jewish-Christian community.[23] That said, that there were Jewish communities in pre-Islamic Medina and other northern Hijazi oases is very likely, and the texts of the Qurʾan and the so-called 'Constitution of Medina' also suggest that the early Muslim community was no stranger to inter-monotheist polemic.[24] The level of contemporary pre-Islamic evidence could not be taken to suggest that any one variety of Judaism or Christianity was thriving in the late sixth- and early seventh-century Hijaz, especially in the area directly around Mecca, but the region as a whole hardly seems quite the religious-historical anachronism that some ninth- and tenth-century Muslim historians presented.

The understanding of Late Antiquity with which we are working here, however, combines monotheism with ecumenical empire, and there is even less evidence for the impact of the latter on the pre-Islamic Hijaz. South Arabia, the fringes of northern Arabia and perhaps northern Oman were being incorporated into the world of Roman and Persian – and, in the case of South Arabia, Ethiopian – imperial designs over the sixth century.[25] There is far less evidence, contemporary or later, for imperial designs in the central Hijaz around Mecca and Medina in the same period.[26] Epigraphic evidence puts a Roman presence in the northern Hijaz as far south as al-Hijr/Hegra/Madaʾin Salih in the second century but no later.[27] Some later Arabic and Persian evidence suggests that there may have been an indirect Sasanian presence in mid- to late sixth- and early seventh-century Medina, but the historicity of much of the detail in these reports is questionable.[28] The best evidence of external interest in exercising political authority over the Hijaz now comes in a Sabaic inscription (Murayghan 3) discovered in 2009, which was written between 552 and 554, and in which the South Arabian ruler Abraha announces – no doubt with some exaggeration – the reach of his power over a handful of Arabian peoples and settlements, including somewhere near Medina (*Yṯrb*).[29]

As the evidence for the pre-Islamic Hijaz currently stands, it is hard to fit the region fully within the world of Late Antiquity, if that periodisation is taken heuristically as an age of ecumenical empire and imperial monotheism. Tensions caused by encroaching monotheism and imperialism may be observable elsewhere in the early seventh-century Arabian Peninsula, and the evidence for prophetic movements at that time in southern, central and eastern Arabia can be linked to these, but such a link is harder to draw from contemporary evidence for the Hijaz.[30] Aziz al-Azmeh's picture of an almost thoroughly pagan region may ultimately be difficult to sustain, but, even if we accept that the early seventh-century Hijaz was no stranger to monotheist communities, we are a very long way from being able to see those monotheist communities as intimately linked with the ecumenical ambitions of the late antique world's imperial powers. It is hard to disagree with Andrew Marsham's suggestion, cited earlier, that the first Muslim community emerged if not completely outside the late antique Near East, then at its very remote margins.

THE UMAYYAD HIJAZ

If the pre-Islamic Hijaz was at the very margins of the world of Late Antiquity, this situation changed entirely over the century of Umayyad rule. Many of these developments played out in obvious ways. The ultimately successful career of Muhammad and his successors ensured that, whatever the earlier balance of biblical

monotheism and paganism in the Hijaz had been, the former came to dominate over the seventh century. Processes of Islamisation in the Arabian Peninsula may have been more complex than many historians have presented them, but by the eighth century obvious practices of paganism seem to have been hard to find in the Hijaz. Over the decades and centuries following Muhammad's death in 632, monotheism in the Hijaz actually became, for some Muslim scholars, combatively exclusive with the argument increasingly commonly made that Muhammad had demanded the expulsion of Jewish and Christian communities from many Hijazi settlements and that ʿUmar b. al-Khattab (r. 634–44) had sought to achieve this.[31] Aziz al-Azmeh has covered in considerable detail the contours of this process of monotheisation of the Hijaz over the course of the seventh century, as part of the process of the development of the Islamic state in that same period, and there is little more that needs adding here.[32]

In a couple of other obvious ways, and due largely to the spectacular expansion of the Islamic empire from the 630s onwards, the Umayyad Hijaz was more tightly connected to surrounding regions in the Near East than the region had been at the start of the seventh century. First, more people outside of the region came to know a bit more about those settlements in which the earliest Muslim community established itself. While there are no definite references to Mecca and only two to Medina/Yathrib from incontrovertibly pre-Islamic sources written within the Roman and Persian empires – Ptolemy's (writing in the second century) Lathrepta/Lathrippa and Stephanus Byzantinus' (*fl. ca.* 528–35) Iathrippa[33] – this situation starts to change over the seventh century. A seventh-century Armenian geography attributed to Ananias of Shirak refers to a place 'which I think the Arabs call Mecca', and the East Syrian *Khuzistan Chronicle* ends with a short discussion of the Arabian Peninsula, which includes a notice about Medina, 'also called Yathrib'.[34] The (probably) late seventh-century West Syrian *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* also refers to a handful of occasions to the 'desert' or 'wilderness' of Yathrib.[35] Second, the Hijaz – and in particular Mecca and Medina – came to be far better integrated into wider economic networks over the Umayyad period and came to share to a greater extent in the relative economic prosperity of other areas in the late antique Near East.[36]

In terms of the broader scope of this chapter, however, it is perhaps more significant that it was over the Umayyad period that ecumenical imperialism and specifically imperial monotheism well and truly came to the Hijaz. There are a few ways in which this important development can be seen. First of all, imperialism alone, before we move on to imperial monotheism. During the era of the so-called Rashidun caliphs (632–61), Medina was the centre of a rapidly expanding empire. We have relatively little good information about the administrative structures of the empire in that period, at least outside of Egypt, nor the ideological foundation of its principal ruling institution, the caliphal office.[37] Such matters become much clearer after the advent of the Umayyads.[38] Slightly paradoxically, therefore, even as we know that Medina's status as the centre of an empire was brought to an end with Muʿawiya's (r. 661–80) victory in the first *fitna*, it is over the Sufyanid (661–84) and Marwanid (684–750) periods that we can actually see the Hijaz becoming more fully integrated as a province within the Islamic empire.

The Hijaz's Umayyad rulers may have originated among its elite families before migrating to Syria, but from 661 onwards they were nonetheless absentee rulers,

who visited the region relatively infrequently, if at all, and only in fairly ceremonial circumstances. Like many imperial provinces, however, the Hijaz's relatively limited economic resources were sought after for exploitation by the ruling family in the imperial centre. In the Hijaz, this was not felt through onerous taxation. Cultivable land in the Hijaz was, according to a relatively early work on the legal theory of the land tax attributed to Abu Yusuf (d. 798), taxed at the *ʿushr* rate, significantly lower than much farmed land in other regions.[39] It is perhaps significant that one seemingly comprehensive report we have, albeit of very dubious authenticity, of provincial tax revenues from the Umayyad caliphate, said to date from the reign of Muʿawiya, does not mention any income from the Hijaz.[40] There are anecdotal reports of some attempts to tax (semi-)nomadic Arabian tribes in the very early Abbasid period, and this may have been a continuation of Umayyad practice, but we have little indication that this raised very much.[41]

Instead, the inhabitants of the Hijaz felt the impact of imperial exploitation through the increasing stranglehold of the Umayyad family over landowning, particularly around Medina, but also in the hinterland of Mecca and al-Taʾif.[42] As in other areas of the late antique Near East, the extent of land under cultivation undoubtedly increased in the Umayyad Hijaz, much of this due to investment that came from the Umayyad family. Muʿawiya is particularly famous in literary sources for investment in irrigation infrastructure in and around Medina; according to al-Waqidi (d. 822), for example, Muʿawiya's local estate manager Ibn Mina undertook the construction of a water channel to irrigate his master's estates to the south of Medina.[43] There are also extant inscriptions from two dams in the Hijaz, one near al-Taʾif and the other a short distance southeast of Medina, which announce that their construction was ordered by Muʿawiya; the text from al-Taʾif is explicitly dated to AH 58/677–8 CE.[44] These texts confirm reports of Muʿawiya's dam building in the Hijaz that are also found in literary sources.[45] Perhaps our most detailed extant description of an Umayyad-era Hijazi estate comes in reports about lands owned by ʿUrwa b. al-Zubayr (d. 712) and his descendants in the Wadi l-ʿAqiq, to the southwest of Medina.[46] ʿUrwa's family here had a villa (*qasr*), dams, irrigation channels and wells on an estate that sounds reminiscent, if on a smaller scale, of the well-known remains at Umm al-Walid in the Balqaʾ, south of Amman.[47]

The Hijaz's local elites did not only have to put up with competition from the Umayyads for expanding cultivable land; they also had to bear seeing their estates confiscated, bought up as distress sales, or otherwise infringed upon by members of the Umayyad family. Muʿawiya again is particularly famous for such actions, but he was not unique among members of the Umayyad family in this.[48] ʿUrwa and his descendants had plenty of difficulties keeping their aforementioned estate from the hands of greedy Umayyads during the reigns of al-Walid b. ʿAbd al-Malik (r. 705–15) and Hisham b. ʿAbd al-Malik (r. 724–43).[49] The local pre-Islamic Medinan elites – known later as the *ansar*, 'helpers' – seem to have ceded their control of land in Medina fairly quickly to the immigrant Meccan elites, including the families of such famous Companions as ʿAli b. Abi Talib (d. 661), Talha b. ʿUbayd Allah (d. 656), ʿAbd al-Rahman b. ʿAwf (d. *ca*. 651) and al-Zubayr b. al-ʿAwwam (d. 656).[50] These elites in turn then saw their lands increasingly if not entirely disappear into Umayyad estates. Hijazi elites were now certainly the subjects of a distant imperial

regime and, in that sense, had been fully embraced – in a way that they may not have appreciated – by the world of Late Antiquity.

Umayyad imperialism also came to combine remarkably well in the Hijaz with imperial monotheism. The Umayyads were concerned to a great extent with what al-Azmeh termed 'the imperialisation of cultic space'. Much attention in the modern study of this topic, including in al-Azmeh's work, has centred around the Umayyads' interest in promoting Jerusalem as a holy city and Temple Mount as a sacred space as well as patronising the construction of sites there and infrastructure for pilgrims.[51] The most famous Umayyad projects in Jerusalem were, of course, the Aqsa Mosque and ʿAbd al-Malik's (r. 685–705) Dome of the Rock; the latter has recently been labelled 'the visible emblem of the entry by the Umayyads and their religion into the imperial order of Late Antiquity'.[52] The reasons behind the construction of this building are famously obscure, but there is plenty of evidence to suggest it was expected – among other functions – to serve as a destination for pilgrims from across the Islamic world: 'one does not erect a building as glorious and assertive as this simply to accommodate local pilgrims'.[53] Umayyad interest in Jerusalem also ranged beyond the structures on Temple Mount: several milestones announcing distances to Jerusalem have now been discovered and, according to the seventh-century West Syrian *Maronite Chronicle*, the first Umayyad caliph in Syria, Muʿawiya, received the oath of allegiance in Jerusalem, after which he undertook a tour of some of the holy sites there.[54]

In spite of all this evidence for interest in Jerusalem, arguments which suggest that the Umayyad caliphs were trying to replace the Hijaz with Palestine as the Islamic world's principal Holy Land seem to go too far. Umayyad rulers from ʿAbd al-Malik onwards showed a great interest in not just associating themselves with certain shrines in the Hijaz, but with the active imperialisation of those shrines. After the final defeat of the Umayyad family's great caliphal rival, ʿAbd Allah b. al-Zubayr, at the end of the second *fitna* in 692, ʿAbd al-Malik and his enforcer, al-Hajjaj b. Yusuf, made sure that the Zubayrid Kaʿba was torn down and rebuilt to a slightly different model: the Kaʿba was an imperial monument and the sacred centre of the Umayyads' imperial monotheism and, as such, could not be left in the form designed by their Zubayrid rival.[55]

ʿAbd al-Malik's son and successor, al-Walid, then undertook, in the early eighth century, perhaps the most significant of all the construction projects on the Prophet's Mosque in Medina. This particular phase of construction saw the Prophet's grave incorporated within the mosque for the first time, which together with lavish spending on enlargement and elaborate decoration, saw the creation of what must have been a hugely impressive structure.[56] It has even been noted of the four most famous imperial-religious monuments built by ʿAbd al-Malik and al-Walid – the Dome of the Rock and the Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem, the Prophet's Mosque in Medina and the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus – that 'These and other projects were by far the largest-scale buildings in Eurasia west of China in this period, and they all explicitly celebrated a triumphal and rich Islam.'[57] Jonathan Bloom has also suggested that alongside the incorporation of Muhammad's grave within the mosque in Medina for the first time, the addition of four corner towers during this (re-)construction project were intended to mark out this new structure as a 'palace temple', a shrine to the Prophet.[58] Even if this

were not the case, al-Walid's patronage of the construction of a mosque around the Prophet's grave that fit within a recognisably Umayyad imperial aesthetic style would have served as a firm reminder that the religion Muhammad had promulgated was now the imperial religion of the ecumenical Umayyad caliphs.[59] That structures such as the Dome of the Rock and the Prophet's Mosque were both understood as Umayyad imperial monuments is further highlighted by the efforts made by Abbasid caliphs to remove the names of the Umayyad founders from the inscriptions and replace them with their own, al-Mahdi (r. 775–85), in the case of the Prophet's Mosque, and al-Maʾmun (r. 813–33), in the case of the Dome of the Rock.[60]

It was not just the central shrines of Mecca and Medina that saw caliphal patronage during the Umayyad period. Other, smaller, secondary shrines in the two towns at sites associated with the memory of Muhammad's mission also emerged with the Umayyads' mark stamped upon them.[61] Just as significantly, at the same time that all this work on the sites themselves was taking place, the Umayyad caliphs were transforming the annual Hajj to Mecca and its hinterland into an imperial pilgrimage. Royal pilgrimages were, of course, known within the late antique empires and were, indeed, one of the primary ways in which ecumenical imperialism could be publicly performed. Late Sasanian rulers, for example, after their coronation would, so we are told, undertake a pilgrimage from Ctesiphon to the sacred fire at Adur Gushnasp, now Takht-i Sulayman in northwest Iran.[62] Nothing else, however, was quite like the Umayyad Hajj, which in some respects can be considered a Hijazi culmination of the late antique phenomenon of imperial monotheism. Every year during the Umayyad period, the Hajj was led either by the caliph in person or – much more frequently – by his designated deputy and this leadership was – so, at least, the Umayyads wished their subjects to think – an essential prerequisite for the adequate fulfilment of this fundamental duty.[63] The Qurʾan announces God's command to Abraham to 'proclaim the Hajj to the people' (Q. 22:27) and the Umayyad caliphs, as the prophets' successors, wished to be seen obeying this command.[64] This verse of the Qurʾan is clearly referenced in two surviving letters written about the caliphal performance of the Hajj on behalf of Umayyad caliphs, one a papyrus document from the time of ʿAbd al-Malik and the other, which only survives in a later anthology, penned by the famous chancery official ʿAbd al-Hamid b. Yahya for the caliph Hisham b. ʿAbd al-Malik.[65] ʿAbd al-Hamid's letter, in particular, displays very clearly how intertwined the Umayyads hoped pilgrimage and caliphate – monotheism and empire – would be in Arabia.

That the Hajj in the Umayyad period was linked to such a great extent with imperial political authority is clear in the reports about rebels against the Umayyads demonstrating their disobedience by performing the pilgrimage under leaders other than the Umayyads' chosen representative. This was demonstrated most clearly in AH 68/688 CE, when four separate Hajj leaders representing four different caliphal claimants – Muhammad b. al-Hanafiyya, Najda b. ʿAmir, Ibn al-Zubayr and ʿAbd al-Malik – led their followers through the rites.[66] Pilgrimage and empire/caliphate were so fully linked in the Umayyad performance of the Hajj that the link between Hajj and caliphate remained a key feature of Islamic political thought for centuries after the Abbasids seized the caliphate in 749–50.[67] Empire and monotheism started

to come to the Hijaz during the so-called Rashidun period, but it was through these developments – the construction of imperial monuments commemorating the holy places in the Hijaz and the construction of Hajj leadership as a caliphal responsibility – that western Arabia was most successfully incorporated into the world of late antiquity during the Umayyad period.

EARLY ISLAM TO LATE ANTIQUITY?

We can now return to some of the thoughts about periodisation, Late Antiquity and the Hijaz's place within it with which this chapter began. There are many different perspectives concerning how Late Antiquity might be made a heuristically meaningful tool of periodisation, rather than simply a chronological shorthand. The point of this chapter has not been to critique these or replace any of them with another model. The intent here has rather been to explore some of the implications for early Islamic history of these attempts to make Late Antiquity meaningful. For with many of the models on offer in recent studies of a meaningful Late Antiquity – the focus here has been on that of imperialism and monotheism, but it could be extended to others as well – the early seventh-century Hijaz, the very region in which Islam first arose with the mission of Muhammad and the promulgation of the Qur'an, is a relatively poor fit. Ecumenical empire and monotheism can certainly be seen flirting around the edges of the Hijaz in the sixth and early seventh centuries, but it is only over the first Islamic century or so – and in particular with the activity of Umayyad caliphs and their officials – that this region of central importance to Islamic history became a fuller part of the world of Late Antiquity. In this more historically significant sense, then, rather than a simple chronological one, parts of Aziz al-Azmeh's argument might be correct and the title of the chapter wrong: we should instead speak of the transition, in western Arabia at least, from early Islam to Late Antiquity.

NOTES

1 See esp. Sizgorich 2004.
2 Fowden 2014.
3 The literature is growing, but see, for example, Brown 1971; Bowersock, Brown and Grabar 1999: vii–xiii; Giardina 1999/2013; Cameron 2002; Walker 2002; James 2008; Morony 2008; Bernheimer and Silverstein 2012.
4 Clover and Humphreys 1989; al-Azmeh 1998.
5 Brown 1971; Bowersock, Brown and Grabar 1999: vii–xiii; Giardina 1999/2013.
6 There are some dissenting voices; see, for example, Daum 2014.
7 For example, Fowden 2004; Marsham 2009a; 2009b; and many of the chapters in George and Marsham 2018.
8 For just a small number of very recent examples, see Khalek 2011; Sijpesteijn 2013; Avni 2014.
9 Crone 1980: 26.
10 Among recent studies, see Reynolds 2008; Neuwirth 2010; Neuwirth, Sinai and Marx 2010; Reynolds 2011; Hoyland 2012; Zellentin 2013; Stroumsa 2015.
11 Marsham 2009b: 3.

12 Al-Azmeh 2014b: 4. For a foundational study of the combination of monotheism and empire in Late Antiquity, see Fowden 1993; the significance of the combination for the study of Late Antiquity is also highlighted in the title of Sarris 2011. For the late antique Sasanian understanding of ecumenical empire couched in salvific religious garb, see Canepa 2009 and Payne 2013. For a recent critique of this understanding of Late Antiquity, however, see Kaldellis 2017.
13 Al-Azmeh 2014b: 40. For the concept of *Verzeitlichung*/temporalisation, al-Azmeh is drawing on Koselleck 2004.
14 Al-Azmeh 2014b: 154.
15 Hoyland 2012: 1069–72.
16 Al-Azmeh 2014a.
17 For some of those later concerns, see Crone 1987: 203–30; Drory 1996; Hawting 1999; Rippin 2013.
18 Ibn Habib 1942; Ibn al-Kalbi 1969; al-Isfahani 1969–79.
19 For eastern Arabian Christianity in the seventh century, see especially Carter 2008; Payne 2011; Kozah et al. 2014. For Christianity in sixth-century Najran, see Beaucamp, Briquel-Chatonnet and Robin 2010 and for the region north of Najran, see Robin, al-Ghabbān and al-Saʿīd 2014.
20 Robin 2004.
21 Hoyland 2011.
22 Mazuz 2014.
23 De Blois 2002, 2004; Stroumsa 2015: 139–58; cf. Griffith 2011.
24 Lecker 2004; Crone 2010, 2012, 2013.
25 Recent studies include Rubin 2007; Gajda 2009; Wilkinson 2010: 55–63; Fisher 2011; Robin 2012; Munt 2017; al-Jahwari et al. 2018. Smith 1954 remains a classic.
26 For an overview of evidence for external imperial interest in pre-Islamic Medina, see Munt 2014: 46–9. Cf. in part, however, Lecker 2015, where it is argued that evidence for Ghassanid-Khazraj connections may suggest that the Romans had something to do with Muhammad's *hijra* to Medina in 622. This argument, however, would have to deal with the evidence that Roman-Ghassanid relations were themselves under strain long before 622; see Fisher 2011: 174–84.
27 Al-Talhi and al-Daire 2005.
28 Kister 1968: 145–9; Daryaee 2002: 15, 19, 24, 46–7 (§33); Lecker 2002.
29 Robin and Ṭayran 2012; English translation and brief discussion now in Robin (2015): 169–70. Yathrib is widely reported to have been the name of Medina in the pre-Islamic period and it is also the name of a particular region within the area of Medina, to the northwest of the site of the Islamic town.
30 Crone 1987: 231–50. For the other Arabian prophetic movements, see Makin 2010; and the brief overviews in Donner 1981: 85; al-Azmeh 2014b: 257–8, 395–6.
31 Munt 2015a.
32 Al-Azmeh 2014b: 358–430.
33 Munt 2014: 43. For a lengthy discussion of the paucity of the evidence behind the famous suggestion that Ptolemy's Makoraba is a reference to Mecca, see now Morris 2018.
34 Ananias of Širak (attrib.) 1992: 70–2; *Khuzistan Chronicle*: 110–11.
35 See Brock's translation in Palmer, Brock and Hoyland 1993: 230, 233, 237.
36 Some of these developments are surveyed, with further bibliography, in Munt 2015b.
37 For Egypt in the mid-seventh century, see Sijpesteijn 2007.
38 Recent studies on the development of the Islamic imperial state in the seventh century include Johns 2003; Robinson 2005, 2010; Hoyland 2006, 2015; Donner 2010. On the caliphal office in the Umayyad period, see the wide-ranging studies in Crone and Hinds 1986; Al-Qadi 1994; Marsham 2009b: 81–180; Marsham 2018.

39 Abu Yusuf 1884–85: 33–5, 39, 69.
40 Al-Yaʿqubi 1883: II, 277–8. Doubts about the reliability of the tax revenues in this list for Muʿawiya's era were already expressed, with good reason, by von Kremer 1888: 1.
41 For example, al-Baladhuri 2003: 524.
42 For Umayyad estate acquisition around Mecca and al-Taʾif, see Lammens 1908: 237–48; Miles 1948; Kister 1972: 84–91. For the area around Medina, see Lammens 1908: 225–52; al-ʿAli 1969; Kister 1977; and now Munt 2018 (where there is further discussion of the evidence that appears in the following two paragraphs).
43 Cited by Abu l-ʿArab 1988: 159–60; al-Samhudi 2001: I, 250. I am amending the reading of the word *sarh*, 'pasturing flock', in these texts to *sharj*, 'a place in which water flows from a stony tract such as is termed *ḥarra* to a soft, or plain, tract' (Lane 1863–93: IV, 152; s.v. '*sh-r-j*'). Medina is surrounded on three sides by volcanic tracts known as *harra*s.
44 Miles 1948; al-Rashid 2000: 32–60.
45 For example, Lughda al-Isfahani 1968: 401.
46 See esp. al-Samhudi 2001: IV, 14–22.
47 Genequand 2010: 441–2.
48 Kister 1977 offers many examples of Mu'awiya's acquisition of estates in Medina through morally dubious means.
49 As well as al-Samhudi's account (cited in n. 46), see also Musʿab al-Zubayri n.d.: 246–7; Ibn ʿAsakir 1995–2000: XXXI, 17–19.
50 For a discussion of the political, social and economic fortunes of five Hijazi elite families over the Umayyad period and the first Abbasid century, see Ahmed 2011.
51 Al-Azmeh 2014b: 421–8.
52 Al-Azmeh 2014b: 424.
53 Robinson 2000: 167. On the original purpose(s) of the Dome of the Rock, see among recent studies Grabar 2006: 19–119; Elad 2008; Milwright 2016; Mourad in this volume.
54 Elad 1999; Marsham 2013.
55 Robinson 2005: 96–100; McMillan 2011: 71, 83. On the significance of the Zubayrid Kaʿba, see now Hawting 2017 and in this volume.
56 See, with further references, Munt 2014: 105–11.
57 Wickham 2009: 292.
58 Bloom 2013: 49–54.
59 On the Umayyad aesthetic style, see Flood 2001: 192–206.
60 Munt 2014: 116.
61 Muranyi 2012; Munt 2014: 111–15.
62 Ibn Khurradadhbih 1889: 119–20; Canepa 2009: 13–15.
63 McMillan 2011.
64 For discussion of the later Umayyads' claims to be successors to the prophets, see Crone and Hinds 1986: esp. 24–42; Al-Qadi 1994: 244–48, 265–8; Rubin, U. 2003.
65 Munt 2013; Sijpesteijn 2014.
66 Hawting 1993: 37–8.
67 Van Steenbergen 2016.

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CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

IBN AL-ZUBAYR, THE KAʿBA AND THE DOME OF THE ROCK

Gerald Hawting

INTRODUCTION: THE PROBLEM

In his much-discussed account of the building of the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem by ʿAbd al-Malik, al-Yaʿqubi (d. early tenth century CE) has the people cry out in protest at the caliph's command that they should not go to Mecca to make Hajj but, instead, perform the ritual circumambulation around the rock over which he had erected the Dome. That rock, which was to stand for them in place of the Kaʿba, the caliph is reported as saying, was the one the Prophet had placed his foot on when he went on his journey to heaven. In response, the people shouted, 'Will you keep us from the Hajj of God's sacred House (*hajj bayt Allah al-haram*), which is a duty laid by God upon us!'[1] Qurʾan 3:97 indeed states that *hijj al-bayt*[2] is a duty owed by men to God, and the House of God for Muslims is the Kaʿba at Mecca.

Al-Yaʿqubi's report immediately follows one about Ibn al-Zubayr's reconstruction of the Kaʿba, which he dates to AH 64/683–4 CE, perhaps suggesting he saw a relationship between the two buildings. According to its foundation inscription, the Dome of the Rock was built in AH 72/691–2 CE. Some scholars have argued that the date refers to the start of the construction. K.A.C. Creswell, however, suggested a date between 684 and 687 for that, and that AH 72 indicates the completion of the building receives some support from, admittedly much later, Muslim literary texts. The issue of the date relates to that of ʿAbd al-Malik's purpose in building it. Although the date is not our main concern here, the following argument suggests that the earlier one is more likely since we support the view that the building of the Dome was, at least in part, a reaction to Ibn al-Zubayr's work on the Kaʿba in Mecca.[3]

The protest attributed to ʿAbd al-Malik's subjects is echoed in the opinions of those academic scholars who have rejected al-Yaʿqubi's statement about the caliph's intentions. Assuming that the Kaʿba had been since the time of the Prophet the destination of the Hajj, they have denied the possibility that the caliph was trying to replace the pilgrimage to Mecca with one to Jerusalem. In their view, it is inconceivable that a Muslim ruler should suppress one of the fundamental Muslim duties, established by God and His Prophet. They have seen al-Yaʿqubi's report, therefore, more as a reflection of his anti-Umayyad views than as an account of the Umayyad caliph's

true intentions. Since the Kaʿba at Mecca was already established incontestably as the focal point of Islamic religious life in the time of ʿAbd al-Malik, they maintain, it is not possible that he should have built the Dome as an alternative centre to the Meccan sanctuary.[4]

Others have seen al-Yaʿqubi's report as inherently plausible.[5] Although it is almost certainly couched in terms reflecting ideas later than the time of ʿAbd al-Malik, that the Dome of the Rock was intended by him as the central sanctuary of emerging Islam cannot be dismissed. The aesthetic excellence and magnificence of the Dome of the Rock, especially if one compares it with the austere simplicity of the Kaʿba, is obvious, and the associations of its site in Jerusalem have great resonance in the monotheistic tradition. Among those associations, the one that may be of special relevance here was the belief that it was the site of Abraham's intended sacrifice of his son in submission to God's command.[6] We know too that some understood the building of the Dome as the restoration of the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem, an event seen by many then, as now, as preparing the way for the coming of the Messiah.[7] All this suggests that the Dome was intended as something more than a subsidiary holy place of secondary importance.

The purpose of this chapter, however, is less to add to the voluminous literature on the Dome of the Rock than to discuss the role and status of the Kaʿba in the period before Ibn al-Zubayr's work on it. It is hard, if not quite impossible, to see how ʿAbd al-Malik could have tried to establish his Dome as the sanctuary for the religion of which he claimed to be the supreme leader, if the Kaʿba had previously attained its status as the sanctuary for all Muslims.

One issue here is how far religious rituals and institutions are to be attributed to the prophet or founder of a religious tradition, and how far they result from more complex historical processes, involving, for example, the decisions of rulers and the needs and wishes of religious communities.

Muslim tradition undoubtedly sees the status of Mecca as the cultic centre of Islam as in accordance with divine commands contained in the Qurʾan, and it also provides both a history of the Meccan sanctuary and a biography of the Prophet that narrate how the Kaʿba was fully incorporated into Islam before the Prophet's death (see later). If that history is accepted, then it would indeed seem unlikely that ʿAbd al-Malik attempted to provide an alternative religious centre for Muslims under his control. On the other hand, it is possible that Muslim tradition abbreviates and links to the Prophet what was a more gradual process, some of which, at least, occurred after his death.

The question of its cultic centre is connected with the identity of Islam as a distinct tradition of monotheism. Identification of Mecca as its birthplace and continuing spiritual centre is one of the features that distinguish Islam from Christianity and Judaism. It is one of the main ingredients in Islam's distinctively Arab identity. However, while Muslim tradition presents this as a reflection of God's design and as a result of the life of the Prophet in Mecca and Medina, identities are as much the result of conscious choices and assertions as they are of historical accident.

We might consider the slow separation of Christianity and Judaism in the early Christian centuries and contrast it with what looks like the rapid emergence of Islam, with an array of distinctive features, including its own cultic centre, in the lifetime of

one man, its Prophet. Naturally, not all religions will develop in the same manner, and it is possible that the contrast between an event and a process is too strong, but it is at least worth noting that the way in which Islam came into the world as reported by its own tradition is markedly different from scholarly understandings of the early formation of Christianity and Rabbinic Judaism.

Relevant too is the nature of authority in the early years of Islam. Those scholars who reject al-Yaʿqubi's account of ʿAbd al-Malik's motives on the grounds that he could not have given an order in contradiction of a divine command and prophetic institution, assume that already in the 70s of the Islamic era (689–98 CE) prophetic authority would always trump that of the caliph. It may well be that a century and half later it would have been impossible for a caliph to order something that was in clear contradiction to the Qurʾan or the prophetic *sunna*, but the work of, among others, Schacht, Crone and Hinds, shows that it was some time before it became accepted that the authority of the Prophet overrode all other possible sources of it.[8]

HOW DID THE MECCAN KAʿBA BECOME THE MUSLIM SANCTUARY? THE TRADITIONAL ACCOUNT

The Islamic tradition is that the Kaʿba at Mecca was established as the Islamic sanctuary in the lifetime of its Prophet and in fulfilment of divine commands. In the Qurʾan, God not only informs the Prophet that Hajj (or *hijj*) of His House is a duty for men in the already mentioned Qurʾan 3: 97, He also commands that men 'complete (*atimmu*) the Hajj and the *ʿumra* for God' in Qurʾan 2: 196, while earlier in the same sura (2: 158) there is an allusion to 'whoever makes Hajj of the House, or *ʿumra*'; and in the so-called *qibla* verses (Qurʾan 2: 144–45) He instructs that al-Masjid al-Haram be faced in prayer. Although none of those verses refer explicitly to the Kaʿba, the traditional interpretation (*tafsir*) understands them as the warrant for the pilgrimage to Mecca (Hajj) and for turning to face Mecca in prayer and other ritual situations.

As well as its interpretation of those scriptural passages, Islamic tradition contains numerous reports which, taken together, constitute a broadly coherent account of how the Kaʿba became the Muslim sanctuary in the time of the Prophet. Underlying that account is the idea that Abraham had founded it at God's command as the centre for His worship, that it was subsequently corrupted by idolatry and polytheism, but that even in the time of Muhammad the Meccans still had some vague memory of it as an Abrahamic foundation.[9]

The attitude of Muhammad to the Kaʿba and its rituals after his call to prophecy and before his departure for Medina (the Hijra in 622) is variously described in the tradition. As a prophet, he would have been, of course, aware of its Abrahamic associations and monotheist origins but horrified by its idolatrous corruptions. There are some reports that suggest that before he was called to prophecy he participated in its rituals on some occasions, but tradition generally is averse to that.[10] Similarly, the direction in which he prayed is variously described: he prayed towards Jerusalem, he prayed towards the Kaʿba, or he positioned himself to the south of the Kaʿba so that both it and Jerusalem were in front of him.[11]

After the move to Medina, we are told that the Prophet and his followers prayed facing Jerusalem for a year or so, until the revelation of the *qibla* verses (Qurʾan 2: 144–5), at which point he and the Muslims turned to face the Kaʿba in prayer.[12] Visiting it for worship was still impossible, however, since it remained under the control of the pagan Meccans. It passing into the Prophet's control and becoming the central sanctuary of Islam is described as the result of a complicated series of events.

In AH 6/628 CE Muhammad decided to go to Mecca with several hundred followers and supporters to perform an *ʿumra*, the so-called 'lesser pilgrimage' which, in contrast to the Hajj, may be performed at any time of the year and involves only rituals associated with the Kaʿba and performed in Mecca. This attempted *ʿumra* could not be completed, for the Meccans prevented the Prophet and his followers from progressing beyond al-Hudaybiyya, where he and his opponents agreed on a truce and a treaty. One of the stipulations of the treaty was that the Prophet would not push on with the intended *ʿumra* at that time, but in the following year he and his followers would be allowed to enter Mecca and remain there for three days.[13] Accordingly, in AH 7/629 CE he was allowed to go into the town, and he and his followers performed the rituals around the Kaʿba, an event often referred to as the *ʿumra* of completion.[14] It is remarkable that at this time, according to Muslim tradition, the Kaʿba would have still been a centre of polytheism and adorned with numerous idols.

The decisive incorporation of the building into Islam, according to tradition, came in AH 8/630 CE. Taking advantage of a technical violation of the truce of al-Hudaybiyya by the Meccans, Muhammad led his followers from Medina to the conquest of Mecca, an event traditionally referred to as the *Fath* (conquest or, more literally, opening). On this occasion Muhammad called for the key of the Kaʿba, entered it and purified it from all traces of idolatry.[15] He is also described going around the outside of the Kaʿba and destroying 360 idols by pointing at them with his staff.[16] Shortly afterwards he made another *ʿumra*, known in tradition as the one from al-Jiʿrana.[17]

In the year of the *Fath*, the Prophet appointed a representative to lead the Muslims in the Hajj, although it is reported that in this year the Hajj was performed according to the custom of the Arabs.[18] Then in the following year AH 9/631 CE, Abu Bakr was appointed to lead the Hajj, and the announcement was made that from this year on the *mushrikun* (traditionally understood as Arab pagans or idolators) would not be allowed to approach al-Masjid al-Haram.[19]

Finally, in AH 10/632 CE the Prophet came again to Mecca from Medina, this time to lead the Hajj himself, in his so-called Farewell Pilgrimage (*Hijjat al-Wadaʿ*).[20] Before his death in the same year, therefore, the Kaʿba and its rituals had been fully incorporated within Islam, and it remained the direction of prayer and centre of Islamic worship from that time onwards. How far and in what ways the Kaʿba had a role in the Hajj at this time, however, is rather obscure from this evidence.

Although academic scholars have usually assumed that Abraham did not found the Kaʿba, they have generally been willing to accept this general account of its incorporation within Islam in the lifetime of Muhammad. A common idea in academic scholarship is that Muhammad took over into his new religion an important and ancient pagan Arab sanctuary, although some have proposed different views about the nature of the Meccan sanctuary before Islam.[21]

The most widely accepted explanation, for which some support can be cited from the traditional sources, is that Muhammad adopted the Kaʿba as Islam's central sanctuary, associating it with Abraham as its founder, in an attempt to give his religion a distinctive Arab character and distinguish it from other forms of monotheism, notably Judaism. That was a major development in his understanding of himself and his religion, which took place early after his move to Medina under the pressure of the rejection of his claims to be a prophet by the Jews of the town. Subsequently, Muhammad's strengthening political and military position relative to that of the Meccans, who had failed to press home their earlier military advantage, led to his being able to take possession of Mecca and its sanctuary as summarised above.[22]

The account provided in the traditional sources is not in itself implausible although modern readers might find some details, especially concerning motivation and causation, unconvincing, and they might question the cohesion of the account as a whole. Any assessment of it should also include other evidence from archaeology and literature, both Muslim and non-Muslim, about the direction that the Arab Muslims (probably not yet so-called) faced in prayer in the lands that they conquered during the early decades of the Islamic era. Some of that evidence suggests they did not always pray towards Mecca and the Kaʿba.

Interpretation of such evidence, however, is often difficult. A mosque not properly orientated towards Mecca, for example, whether attested by archaeological finds or referred to in a literary text, might be accounted for simply by inaccuracy or lack of precision in its orientation, or by the reporter's own assumptions or lack of knowledge.[23] Here, we focus on the evidence in the Muslim historical tradition about Mecca and the Kaʿba in the first century or so of Islam, and on two questions in particular: first, the relationship between the Kaʿba and the Hajj, and second, the nature of Ibn al-Zubayr's work on the Kaʿba.

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND TO IBN AL-ZUBAYR'S CONSTRUCTION OF THE KAʿBA

One element of al-Yaʿqubi's report about ʿAbd al-Malik's building of the Dome of the Rock at least is undeniable. At the time when the Dome was being built, Mecca *was* under the control of Ibn al-Zubayr and it would have been undesirable, to put it mildly, for the Umayyad to allow his subjects to go there, where they would be subject to his rival's propaganda. Ibn al-Zubayr, son of a leading companion of the Prophet and of a daughter of the first caliph, Abu Bakr, was one of a small group of influential Muslims who had refused to give allegiance (the *bayʿa*) to the Umayyad (Sufyanid) Yazid b. Muʿawiya, who succeeded his father as caliph in AH 60/680 CE. Following the killing of al-Husayn b. ʿAli at Karbala in the following year, Ibn al-Zubayr repaired to Mecca where he proclaimed himself 'the fugitive at the sanctuary' (*al-ʿaʾidh bi-l-bayt*) and was a thorn in the side of Umayyad authorities in Medina.[24]

When Yazid died in AH 64/683 CE, Ibn al-Zubayr was under attack in Mecca by an army despatched to the Hijaz by the caliph earlier. When news of Yazid's death reached the army, it withdrew, leaving Ibn al-Zubayr in control, and before long his authority was recognised in most of the lands of the Middle East that had been

conquered in the name of Islam. Following the withdrawal of the Umayyad forces, Ibn al-Zubayr demolished and rebuilt the Kaʿba, introducing changes to its form.[25]

Umayyad authority was confined, at first, to Syria, before Marwan (r. 684–5) and then his son ʿAbd al-Malik who acceded to the caliphate in 685, began gradually to extend the territory under their control. The Umayyads benefitted from problems that Ibn al-Zubayr's governors had in trying to maintain control of Iraq, and in 691 ʿAbd al-Malik regained control of that province after defeating and killing its governor, Ibn al-Zubayr's brother Musʿab.

That was followed immediately by his sending his general al-Hajjaj with an army to attack Ibn al-Zubayr in Mecca. This second Umayyad attack on the town was successful and in late 692 Ibn al-Zubayr fell in the fighting and al-Hajjaj took possession of the town on behalf of ʿAbd al-Malik. One of the victor's first acts was to reverse those changes Ibn al-Zubayr had made to the form of the Kaʿba. Al-Hajjaj is reported as restoring it to the form it had had when the still pagan Meccans had built it before Islam, as it had been before Ibn al-Zubayr's building.[26]

So far as we can tell, the position of Mecca and its Kaʿba was unchallenged after al-Hajjaj's killing of Ibn al-Zubayr on behalf of ʿAbd al-Malik, while Jerusalem remained an important but secondary holy site for Islam. In the spring of 695, ʿAbd al-Malik himself, it is reported, came to Mecca to lead the Hajj. After describing how he did that and the number of official addresses (*khutab*) that he gave, al-Yaʿqubi's account of the event concludes with the caliph standing at the Kaʿba and saying, 'By God, I wish that I had not introduced anything new into it, and left alone Ibn al-Zubayr and what he had taken upon himself (*taqallada*).' Then he set off towards Medina.[27]

DID THE KAʿBA HAVE A ROLE IN THE HAJJ IN THE FIRST CENTURY OF ISLAM?

In Islam the status of the Kaʿba and of Mecca are closely bound up with the importance of the Hajj as an element in Muslim ritual life. As we have seen, al-Yaʿqubi portrays ʿAbd al-Malik's subjects as horrified that he should command them to abandon – even if it was meant only temporarily – the Hajj of God's sacred House, the Kaʿba.

Now, there seems to be no strong reason for questioning the importance of Hajj from early Islamic times onwards, although questions about its significance and meaning in this period may remain. Chroniclers like al-Tabari provide for almost every year the name of the person who led the Hajj in that year, for him an important demonstration of the continuity of the Islamic community from the time of the Prophet onwards. While it is possible that some of that information results from guesswork on the part of his sources, and that the institutional continuity may not be quite so marked as the sources suggest, nevertheless the names and further details that are sometimes given seem broadly convincing.[28]

The question here is whether the Kaʿba had a part in the Hajj in this early period, for if it did not, then the interpretation of the building of the Dome of the Rock as an attempt to make the Jerusalem sanctuary the main one of Islam would be more comprehensible.

It seems to have been the German scholar Julius Wellhausen (d. 1918), who first drew attention to the fact that the Kaʿba before Islam seems to have had nothing to do with the Hajj. He argued that the Islamic practice whereby the individual pilgrim begins and ends his Hajj at Mecca by performing the circumambulation of the Kaʿba, the main ritual of the ʿ*umra*, was part, as he put it, of an attempt to make the Hajj an appendix to the cult of the Kaʿba. He especially drew attention to the way in which the idea that one ends one's Hajj by visiting and making circumambulation of the Kaʿba contradicts the notion that the state of ritual purity (*ihram*) necessary for the Hajj is ended by the cutting of the Hajji's hair at Mina, the place where ritual animal slaughter is performed. Whereas the rituals performed outside Mecca, at ʿArafa, Muzdalifa and Mina, are communal in nature, the visit to the Kaʿba is essentially a private act, and one can see in Islamic law and in some historical reports that the blending of the Hajj and the ʿ*umra* has led to some unresolved problems.[29] In some books of Islamic law it is stated that the fundamental rite of the Hajj is the standing (*wuquf*) of the Hajjis at ʿArafa, and that if one misses the *wuquf* one misses the Hajj.[30]

Wellhausen did not discuss when the amalgamation of Hajj and ʿ*umra* was achieved, but he, like academic scholarship generally, would probably have attributed it to Muhammad when he took control of the Kaʿba.[31] Does the traditional material on the Kaʿba and the Hajj in the period until ʿAbd al-Malik's victory over Ibn al-Zubayr support that? The question is asked because, as will be discussed in the next section, Ibn al-Zubayr's work on the Kaʿba was an event of some importance, and may be the crucial stage in the incorporation of the Kaʿba into Islam.

That rituals performed at the Kaʿba were not an essential part of the Hajj is stated explicitly in two reports from al-Waqidi (d. AH 207/823 CE) by al-Tabari about the year AH 72 (the Hajj would have been in late April and early May 692), when al-Hajjaj was besieging Ibn al-Zubayr in Mecca. This was after Ibn al-Zubayr's rebuilding of the Kaʿba.

We are told, first, that al-Hajjaj led the Hajj but did not circumambulate the Kaʿba or go there. He was in the state of ritual purity (*ihram*). Although bearing arms, he did not have relations with women or perfume himself until after Ibn al-Zubayr was killed. Ibn al-Zubayr slaughtered animals in Mecca on the Day of Sacrifices (at the end of the Hajj), but neither he nor his men made Hajj in that year because they did not fulfil the standing ritual (*wuquf*) at ʿArafa.[32]

Then al-Tabari transmits from al-Waqidi a report of Muslim b. Babak who says that he came to make Hajj and found al-Hajjaj's forces encamped around Mecca. Muslim and his companions entered Mecca where they circumambulated the Kaʿba and the two hills called al-Safa and al-Marwa (essentially the ʿ*umra* rituals), and then al-Hajjaj led the people in the Hajj. Muslim saw him performing the *wuquf* at ʿArafa mounted and armed, and then he left without circumambulating the Kaʿba. Finally, Muslim comments on the large amount of provisions available to al-Hajjaj's men, brought by a caravan from Syria.[33]

Al-Baladhuri also has two accounts of this event. The first, also citing al-Waqidi, is essentially a version of al-Tabari's first account in somewhat different words. It repeats the information that Ibn al-Zubayr could not leave Mecca but could perform some rituals there, while he would not allow al-Hajjaj to come to the Kaʿba. Because the account does not use the word *hajj* or a verb related to it, it is not quite so clear

as al-Tabari's version in expressing the distinction between the Hajj and the rites at the Kaʿba.

Al-Baladhuri's second report is more complex, but could be understood to show that visiting the Kaʿba was integral to performing the Hajj. Ibn ʿUmar, who made Hajj in that year, appealed to al-Hajjaj to desist from his bombardment of Mecca so that the pilgrims ('God's delegation', *wufud Allah*) who had travelled from all over the earth could make their circumambulation of the Kaʿba. Al-Hajjaj, it is said, complied with the request 'until they had fulfilled their obligations in Mecca … and gone out to Mina and ʿArafa, made *wuquf* with the people there, and attended the stations (*mashahid*) with them'. Ibn al-Zubayr did not prevent the pilgrims from visiting the Kaʿba and other ritual sites in Mecca. Once everything had finished, al-Hajjaj gave a warning and his bombardment of Mecca recommenced.[34]

Some features of that latter report make it doubtful whether it really reflects conditions at the time of al-Hajjaj's attack on Ibn al-Zubayr, however. Its provenance is questionable. It is introduced by *qala*, implying that it too comes from al-Waqidi, but al-Baladhuri seems to be the only one of our primary sources to cite it.[35] Its vocabulary reflects an idealistic religious understanding of Hajj: pilgrims are 'God's delegates'; al-Hajjaj is reminded that he is in 'a sacred month and a sacred land'; and the reference to the pilgrims as 'having come from all the regions of the earth, driving on their camels and walking on foot' inevitably calls to mind Qurʾan 22: 27.[36]

Al-Tabari's wording, therefore, likely reflects a more historical understanding of the situation (visiting the Kaʿba was not an essential part of Hajj) whereas al-Baladhuri's offers a later assumption, when the visit to the Kaʿba was integrated into the Hajj.[37] Other material, while not so explicit, does not generally contradict that conclusion.

It seems that none of the annual Hajj reports before the year AH 72 (691–2 CE) in al-Tabari's *History* refers to the Kaʿba, although since most are brief and lacking detail that may not be significant. When any details about the Hajj are given, though, it is always the rites outside Mecca that are mentioned.

For example, in year AH 62 (when the Hajj would have been in August 682), the year when the Medinese began to manifest resentment against Yazid, when Ibn al-Zubayr was in Mecca, and when Najda b. ʿAmir al-Hanafi led a revolt in the Yamama region of north central Arabia, we are told Yazid's governor of Medina, al-Walid b. ʿUtba led the Hajj, but the followers of Ibn al-Zubayr and those of Najda each followed their own leader. That is expressed thus:

> 'al-Walid processed from ʿArafa with most of the people while Ibn al-Zubayr remained standing at ʿArafa with his followers and Najda with his; then Ibn al-Zubayr processed with his followers, and Najda with his; not one of them joined the procession of the others.[38]

In this passage the Hajj is described in terms of ceremonies outside Mecca: the 'standing' (*wuquf*) at the foot of mount ʿArafa and the 'procession' (*ifada*) from ʿArafa to Muzdalifa, and there is no reference to the Kaʿba.

It would be wrong to say that the Kaʿba never appears in reports that allude to the Hajj, but how far they suggest it had a role in it is questionable. In fact, it is surprising how rarely the Kaʿba seems to be mentioned generally in the historical material on

the period between the death of the Prophet and Ibn al-Zubayr's activity in Mecca. Of course, Mecca was not a place of much political importance under the Rightly Guided and early Umayyad caliphs, and the town itself appears fairly infrequently and without much detail in reports about events during that period. In accounts of Umayyad activities in Arabia, before the conflict with Ibn al-Zubayr, Medina is much more prominent than Mecca. For example the accounts of the activities of Busr b. Abi Artat, whom Muʿawiya sent to assert his authority in Arabia towards the end of his struggle with ʿAli, have a fair amount of detail about what happened in Medina and Yemen, but Mecca is mentioned only briefly.[39] Even the army sent by the caliph Yazid b. Muʿawiya, that ended up attacking Ibn al-Zubayr in Mecca, seems initially to have been sent in response to events in Medina.[40]

While it might be argued that Mecca's lack of political importance explains the greater prominence accorded to Medina in the narratives, it is striking that even in the religious sphere Medina received more attention from the early Umayyad caliphs. There are reports in the historical tradition of attempts by Muʿawiya and other Umayyad caliphs to increase the religious significance of Syria (*al-Shaʾm*, perhaps here signifying Jerusalem) at the expense of that of the Hijaz. No doubt the way in which they are reported reflects religious hostility to the Umayyads, and it may even be that the events narrated are in some way symbolic rather than real. What concerns us here is that the Hijazi focal point is Medina, rather than Mecca.

Muʿawiya, who famously was reported to have visited Christian holy places in Jerusalem and to have avoided the 'seat of Muhammad' (Medina),[41] is said to have planned to move the Prophet's pulpit (*minbar*) and staff from Medina to Syria. Only manifestations of divine anger through natural phenomena (apparently an eclipse) led him to desist and to say that he had merely intended to inspect the pulpit because he feared it might be riddled with woodworm. The same plan, again aborted, is attributed to ʿAbd al-Malik and al-Walid, and when Sulayman made Hajj and learned of his immediate predecessor's plan, he said:

> We have seized worldly power, which is in our hands; should we now have designs on one of the symbols of Islam, which people come to visit, and carry it off to what we already have? That would not be for our good![42]

It may be significant that it is regarding the time of ʿAbd al-Malik and later that one finds Mecca and the Kaʿba rather than Medina in material of this type, with reports that the governor Khalid al-Qasri expressed willingness to transport the Kaʿba to Syria if the caliph so ordered.[43]

Al-Yaʿqubi's account of Muʿawiya's plan to move the pulpit from Medina is appended to his information that Muʿawiya made Hajj twice during his rule, in AH 44/664–5 CE and AH 50/670–1 CE. He does not mention the Kaʿba in connection with the two pilgrimages, but does so when he tells us that Muʿawiya made the *ʿumra* of Rajab in AH 56/676 CE. Muʿawiya, he says then, was the first to cover the Kaʿba with silk brocade (*dibaj*) and he purchased servants for it.[44]

In summary, while it is not possible to say with certainty that the Kaʿba played no part in the Hajj until after ʿAbd al-Malik's defeat of Ibn al-Zubayr, there is enough in our sources to suggest that during this period the Meccan sanctuary did not have an essential role in the Hajj.

It is notable that al-Yaʿqubi's report about Muʿawiya's covering it with brocade appears in connection with *ʿumra*. Al-Tabari, in one of his accounts about the enlargement of the space around the Kaʿba known as al-Masjid al-Haram, tells us that ʿUmar increased it in size when he came to Mecca to make *ʿumra*.[45] It is notable too that the majority of the Prophet's interactions with the Kaʿba concern *ʿumra* rather than Hajj. Only the Farewell Pilgrimage is an exception, and the accounts of that deserve an analysis that cannot be undertaken here. To some extent, therefore, the evidence supports the view of Wellhausen and others that originally it was *ʿumra* rather than Hajj that was the rite associated with the Kaʿba.

When, then, was the Kaʿba integrated into the Hajj, and when did it come to be established as the sanctuary of Islam?

THE NATURE OF IBN AL-ZUBAYR'S WORK ON THE KAʿBA

Ibn al-Zubayr's work on the Kaʿba at Mecca is dated by al-Tabari to AH 64–5/683–5 CE, and is presented as one in a series of re-buildings of a structure that had existed continually at least since the time of Abraham. From the traditional reports it seems clear that it was more than a superficial and inconsequential refashioning of the Kaʿba.[46]

Of the series of re-buildings of the Kaʿba reported in Muslim literature, there are three that concern us here. The first is said to have taken place when Muhammad was still a young man, not yet called to be a prophet. It was undertaken by the dominant tribe of Mecca, Quraysh, and is often referred to as Quraysh's rebuilding. It is not possible to date precisely but, if it really happened, would have been in the late sixth or early seventh century. The fact that it was done before Islam, in the Jahiliyya, is significant: the form of the building was a product of the 'age of ignorance'. The second rebuilding is that of Ibn al-Zubayr, and the third that by the Umayyad general al-Hajjaj on the orders of the caliph ʿAbd al-Malik following his victory over, and killing of, Ibn al-Zubayr in AH 73/692–3 CE.[47]

When Quraysh rebuilt the Kaʿba, we are told, they made two changes to the form it had had previously. They excluded from it a semi-circular area known as the Hijr on the northwest side of the building, which had previously been included inside it; and they raised the single door of the building, situated towards the east corner and previously at ground level, high above the ground, so that it could only be entered via steps which were moved into place when entry was desired.

Ibn al-Zubayr is reported to have made a number of changes or innovations when he rebuilt the Kaʿba, including reducing the number of pillars inside the building from six to three, raising its height, and inserting windows or apertures in the roof. However, the reports give prominence, first, to his extension of Quraysh's building so that it once again included the Hijr, and second to his installation of two doors at ground level, one to go in by and one to exit. The entrance was in the same place as the previous door, but was now placed at ground level; the exit was opposite, close to the southern corner of the building.

Finally, al-Hajjaj did not demolish Ibn al-Zubayr's Kaʿba completely. He knocked down the part that covered the Hijr, and restored the wall between the building and

the Hijr which had existed in Quraysh's building; further, he closed up the second door added by Ibn al-Zubayr, and elevated the entrance once again above the ground so that the building had to be entered by steps moved into place. He did not, however, reduce the height or restore the pillars that Ibn al-Zubayr had removed. Nothing seems to be said about windows or apertures in the ceiling, but since the building is normally completely covered by an ornamented shroud, the *kiswa*, they would seem to be irrelevant. This is fundamentally the Kaʿba as it has existed ever since, although many subsequent repairs and adornments have introduced some modifications.

One might expect to find explanations about the significance of those changes and about other reasons, such as historical circumstances, which led to the reconstructions at the time they were undertaken. Regarding their significance, tradition has little to tell us. The decision by Quraysh to leave out the Hijr is explained by their running out of building material, a purely accidental circumstance; and they raised up the door to prevent theft, or to keep out flood water, or simply because they wished to demonstrate their control over those to whom they would allow entrance. Incidentally, the prolixity of variant explanations, such as those regarding the door, calls into question the value of any of them, even though each might be plausible alone. There is no suggestion that the changes had any relation to the way the Kaʿba was used, or to its role in religious rituals.

In the case of Ibn al-Zubayr, we are told that he took the opportunity to rebuild the Kaʿba because it had been damaged during the siege by the Umayyad army. That sounds plausible, although again there are multiple variant versions of how the damage occurred, and the extent of the harm it had suffered is called into question by a report that, when news of the death of the caliph Yazid arrived, Ibn al-Zubayr allowed the soldiers to enter Mecca and perform circumambulation of the Kaʿba.[48] Furthermore, it is also narrated that he demolished and rebuilt the Kaʿba because he had heard that the Prophet himself would have done so if he had had the opportunity, which suggests that the immediate historical situation was irrelevant. That is another example of the prolixity and redundancy of explanatory material in these reports. Apart from his aim to fulfil the wishes of the Prophet regarding the Kaʿba, there is no explanation of the significance of his provision of two doors, but concerning the issue of the Hijr there is more detail.

Finally, it appears that al-Hajjaj reversed the changes Ibn al-Zubayr had made and restored the building more or less to the form it had had following the rebuilding by Quraysh, simply out of hatred for the rival caliph and all his works. No other explanation seems to be provided. There is little reason to think that the Kaʿba had been damaged on this occasion, and nothing is said about the religious or other significance of the features that were now rejected.

In all of this it is the building of Ibn al-Zubayr that seems to be at the centre of things. It is in connection with that that we hear the claim about the wishes of the Prophet for the Kaʿba, and obtain information about the significance of the Hijr.

The Prophet's wishes for the Kaʿba are contained in a hadith transmitted from him on the authority of his widow, ʿAʾisha. The hadith is widely reported, not merely in the accounts of Ibn al-Zubayr's rebuilding but in the canonical hadith collections of Sunni Islam. That shows that it was widely accepted as an authentic record of the words of the Prophet. Consequently, the Kaʿba as it has existed ever since al-Hajjaj's

reversal of Ibn al-Zubayr's work on it, is not viewed as being in accordance with the wishes of the Prophet. More than that, it exists in a form given to it in the Jahiliyya.[49]

The hadith is transmitted from ʿAʾisha through several different lines of transmission, and the words of the Prophet are reported in different versions, sometimes giving more and sometimes less detail about what he would have liked to do to the Kaʿba, had he been able. Common to just about all versions are the Prophet's words explaining why he was unable to do what he wanted. He told ʿAʾisha: 'If it were not for the fact that your people [the Quraysh] were only recently unbelievers [*kuffar*; or variantly idolaters, *mushrikun*], I would demolish the Kaʿba and rebuild it.' Then the Prophet goes on to specify what he would have liked to do, in more or less detail. Sometimes he says he would like to include the Hijr and give it two doors; sometimes he says that he wished to restore it to the foundations (*qawaʿid*) of Abraham.

Although there are several different lines of transmission of the hadith, it is notable that many of them contain the names of members of the Zubayrid family or supporters of Ibn al-Zubayr. ʿAʾisha was Ibn al-Zubayr's maternal aunt, and in some reports about his rebuilding of the Kaʿba it is claimed that he heard the Prophet's words from her himself.

This hadith, together with other material from tradition, provides some information about the significance of the Hijr. The different versions of the hadith indicated that extending the Kaʿba over the Hijr was presented as the equivalent of restoring the Kaʿba to the foundations established by Abraham. The historical reports about Ibn al-Zubayr's rebuilding contain accounts of his taking people out to the razed building, where they were able to see marvellous stones extending into the Hijr, which they identified as the foundations of Abraham. Other material on the Hijr is not so consistent in identifying it with Abraham's foundations, but nevertheless associates it with Abraham and his family.[50] Thus, it was the place where Ishmael and his mother Hagar were buried; or it was the place where God opened a gate to Paradise for Ishmael, allowing the breezes of the Garden to cool him after he had complained of the heat of Mecca; or it was a place where a stone was found, either marking Ishmael's tomb or bearing an inscription promising blessings for the people of Mecca. The latter probably alludes to the Qurʾanic passages that refer to Abraham, at the time when he and Ishmael 'raised the foundations of the House', asking God to provide sustenance for the people of the land.[51]

The hadith and associated material, therefore, suggest that Ibn al-Zubayr was claiming to establish the Kaʿba on the foundations built by Abraham, and that in doing so he was achieving something that the Prophet wanted but had been unable to do. In addition to its association with Ibn al-Zubayr, his family and his supporters, the authenticity of the hadith is called into question by the improbability of its claims. If the Prophet had known that the sanctuary was not established on the foundations laid down by Abraham, would he have delayed in correcting that situation simply because of the susceptibilities of Quraysh? Indeed, since we have been told by tradition that Quraysh only left the Hijr out of the Kaʿba because they ran out of building materials, why should they object to the Prophet including the area?

There are grounds, then, for concluding that Ibn al-Zubayr's work on the Kaʿba was connected with the idea that Abraham founded the Kaʿba, and that he and his supporters asserted that, until he rebuilt it, it was not properly grounded on

them. That would concur with the evidence, presented here, that the Kaʿba was not associated with the Hajj, and had an ambivalent status in emerging Islam. According to Ibn al-Zubayr and his supporters, the Prophet had not established the Kaʿba on the foundations laid down by Abraham, and he was now doing that.

If one accepts the hadith and the reports about Ibn al-Zubayr's work at face value, he was merely rectifying a mistake made at the time of Quraysh's rebuilding. Everyone knew that the Kaʿba had been built by Abraham, and the problem was merely that part of his foundations had been left out. The material could, however, be understood more radically: until Ibn al-Zubayr's work on it, the Kaʿba was not regarded as a sanctuary built by Abraham, and it was now being identified as such for the first time. Going further, it might be argued that until the Kaʿba came to be understood as a sanctuary founded by Abraham and integrated into the Hajj, the latter too had not been associated with Abraham. Not only would that be in accordance with the limited and ambiguous role of the Kaʿba until this time, it would resonate with ʿAbd al-Malik's building of a sanctuary on a site associated with Abraham shortly afterwards.[52]

In the reports about Ibn al-Zubayr's building activity, indeed, there are indications that it was more than a mere refashioning of the pre-existing building. It involved the bringing of costly materials from as far away as Yemen, and the form of the new building raises questions about its ritual function.[53] The raised height, extended length, apertures in the roof and, above all, the provision of two doors at ground level, suggest that it was envisaged as a building where significant ceremonial or ritual activity would occur inside. We do not know the form of the part of the building covering the Hijr. Günter Lüling's reconstruction of it so that the area over the Hijr was in the form of an apse like that of a church may be going too far, but he is one of the few scholars who have sought to relate form to function here.[54]

Hadiths and law books display a tension between two concepts of the sanctuary. In some traditions and legal discussions, it is envisaged as a building within which important ritual activity, notably the ritual prayer (*salat*), takes place; in others that view is rejected and its function as a closed sanctuary, where ritual, especially circumambulation (*tawaf*), is performed around and outside, is asserted. The latter view is in accordance with Islamic practice: although the Kaʿba is opened and selected individuals are allowed inside, entering it is not a normal occurrence or part of the Hajj rituals. The idea of the sanctuary as a place to be entered for prayer, however, is evident in hadiths, historical reports and legal opinions, and it seems likely that it is old and that the material expressing a contrary view is a reaction to it.[55]

Now, although the historical reports about Ibn al-Zubayr's rebuilding of the Kaʿba describe him as making *tawaf* and venerating the Black Stone, the details about the form of his construction suggest that he saw it as a building to be entered for the purposes of ritual, and this is another indication that his work on it was more significant than the tradition generally portrays it. Al-Hajjaj's subsequent destruction of the main features of Ibn al-Zubayr's sanctuary, whatever its immediate motive, had the effect of restoring it to its previous form and ritual function.

CONCLUSION

There still remain many obscurities about the history of the incorporation of the Kaʿba into Islam, but the evidence of the Muslim traditional material discussed here indicates that it was incomplete by the time of the death of the Prophet. It also suggests that Ibn al-Zubayr's building of the Kaʿba was the most important stage in adopting the building as the Islamic sanctuary. Although al-Hajjaj restored the building to the form it had had before Ibn al-Zubayr's work, the latter's claim that the Hijr was to be venerated equally with the area included in the building lived on in Islamic practice, since the circumabulation ritual does not merely go around the Kaʿba but encompasses the Hijr too.

The proximity in time between Ibn al-Zubayr's work on the Kaʿba and that of ʿAbd al-Malik on the Dome of the Rock, as well as certain connections and similarities in ideas about, and rituals involving, both buildings, point to the Jerusalem sanctuary as a response to the building of the one in Mecca, although that is unlikely to be the only motive for the erection of the Dome. Both the Dome and the Kaʿba perhaps represent rival responses to a growing need in early Islam for an Abrahamic sanctuary that would be the focal point for the new religion's developing ritual life.

ʿAbd al-Malik's apparent willingness to embrace the Kaʿba at Mecca once his rival for the caliphate, Ibn al-Zubayr, was out of the way is at first sight surprising, given his previous investment in the Dome of the Rock. However, it was not the only aspect of his rival's policies that he showed himself willing to adopt, as the development of Islamic coinage shows.[56]

We do not know if al-Yaʿqubi's account was his own or had been transmitted to him, but the evidence discussed here gives some plausibility to his view that ʿAbd al-Malik intended the Dome to be the equivalent of the Kaʿba for his subjects, whether temporarily or for the foreseeable future. On the other hand, his account reflects a situation where the Kaʿba has come to be not merely associated with the Hajj but understood as its main focus. Our argument here is that that was not the case by the time of al-Hajjaj's victory over Ibn al-Zubayr, but that the latter's rebuilding of the Kaʿba, together with the ideological claims made for it, was a crucial stage in bringing it about.

NOTES

1 Al-Yaʿqubi 1390/1970: II, 261.

2 *Hijj* is generally understood to have the same meaning as *hajj*.

3 For the suggested later dating, see Rotter 1982: 227–30; and Blair 1993: 59–87, especially 62–3; Compare Creswell 1958: 17ff. and Sibt Ibn al-Jawzi's *Mirʿat al-zaman* cited by Elad 1993: 33–4; Grabar 2006: 59–62, is non-committal, as is Lawrence Nees, see: Nees 2016: 102. The argument of Marcus Milwright that the mosaic inscription shows signs of stylistic development and therefore is likely to have taken some time to be completed, may support the later dating, see: Milwright 2016.

4 Goitein 1950: 104 ff.; Goitein 1966: 140; Grabar 1959: 35–6, 45–6; Grabar 2006: 112–13; and see the addition by S.M. Stern to Goldziher's footnote 1 on p. 45 of the English translation of vol. 2 of the latter's *Muhammedanische Studien* (see the following note).

5 Goldziher 1971: 44–5; Elad 1993: 33–58, has shown that al-Yaʿqubi's account of the reason for ʿAbd al-Malik's building of the Dome, although it contains anachronisms, is fundamentally supported by a number of other early Muslim writers who are cited in

later sources. Elad regards the building of the Dome in attempting to bring the Hajj to Jerusalem as 'the explanation which best fits the historical framework'. At p. 40, n. 30, Elad names several scholars who have taken one side or the other in the dispute about the validity of the idea that the Dome was built as a destination for the Hajj. See too Elad 1995: 158 ff.

6 For the site's associations in Jewish and, to some extent, Christian mythical memory, see, for example, Grabar 2006: 49–53. Joseph Witztum has argued that the biblical story of Abraham's aborted sacrifice (Genesis 22), as interpreted in later Jewish and Christian texts, lies behind the allusions to Abraham's building of the sanctuary in Qurʾan 2:127, which Muslim scholars understood as referring to the Kaʿba: Witztum 2009.

7 See the 'Jewish Apocalypse on the Umayyads' summarised in Hoyland 1997: 317 (Lévi 1914: 178); Lewis 1950: 325, 327, with reference to the *Secrets of Simon ben Yohai* (summarised in Hoyland 1997: 308–13; although the text seems to attribute the restoration of the Temple to the second Muslim caliph, it is perhaps more likely a reference to the work of ʿAbd al-Malik, as Lewis suggested). The Arabic version of the life of the fifth-century Coptic ascetic Shenute also contains his vision foretelling the time when the Arabs will attempt to rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem (for discussion see Hoyland 1997: 279–82).

8 Schacht 1950; Crone and Hinds 1986.

9 Hawting 1999: 20–44 for further discussion.

10 Andrae 1917: 127–9. According to a report ascribed to Jabir, Muhammad made Hajj twice before his Hijra (al-Tabari 1879–1901: I, 1765).

11 See *EI*2, 'Kibla' (A.J. Wensinck) for details.

12 Al-Tabari's *Tafsir* on Qurʾan 2: 142 and 144 provides different opinions on why the Prophet was told to turn from Jerusalem (Bayt al-Maqdis) in prayer towards the Kaʿba (al-Tabari 1968, II, 1–7 and 19–24).

13 *EI*2, 'al-Hudaybiya' (W. Montgomery Watt) for a summary.

14 Ibn Hisham 1955, *Sira* II, 370–2 (Eng tr., Ibn Hisham 1955: 530–1); al-Tabari 1879–1901: I, 1594 ff.

15 Ibn Hisham 1955, *Sira* II, 389–428 (Eng. tr. Ibn Hisham 1955: 540–61); al-Tabari 1879–1901: I, 1618–44.

16 Al-Azraqi 1389/1969: I, 120–2.

17 Ibn Hisham 1955, *Sira*, II: 500–1 (Eng. tr. Ibn Hisham 1955: 597); al-Tabari 1879–1901: I, 1685–86.

18 Ibn Hisham 1955, *Sira*, 2: 500 (Eng. tr. Ibn Hisham 1955: 597); al-Tabari 1879–1901: I, 1685 (from Ibn Ishaq): 'In that year [AH 8/630 CE] the people made Hajj according to the custom of the Arabs (*ʿala ma kanat al-ʿarab tahajju biha*). ʿAttab b. Asid led the Muslims in the Hajj.'

19 Ibn Hisham 1955, *Sira*: II, 543–54 (Eng. tr. Ibn Hisham 1955: 617–24); al-Tabari 1879–1901: I, 1720–21.

20 Ibn Hishām 1955, *Sira*: II, 2 601–606 (Eng. tr. Ibn Hisham 1955: 649–52); al-Tabari 1879–1901: I, 1751–56.

21 For example, Günter Lüling argued that the Kaʿba was a Trinitarian Christian church that Muhammad took over and began to purify from the perspective of Jewish Christianity. The subsequent re-buildings by Ibn al-Zubayr and al-Hajjaj continued that process in the direction that Muhammad wished for. The theory involves an almost total rejection of the traditional Muslim accounts, although certain details reported in the tradition are seized upon and used. See Lüling 1981: especially 126–61.

22 The scholar most influential in establishing this version of the incorporation of the Kaʿba into Islam was Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje (d. 1936). His ideas were further elaborated

by Arent Jan Wensinck (d. 1939). For a critical discussion see *EI2*, 'Ibrahim' (R. Paret s.v.), where the main bibliography is given.

23 Compare Crone and Cook 1977: 23–4, and Hoyland 1997: 560–73.

24 *EI2*, 'ʿAbd Allah b. al-Zubayr' (H.A.R. Gibb).

25 Al-Azraqi 1389/1969: I, 201–21; al-Tabari 1879–1901: II, 427, 537, 592–3; al-Baladhuri 1938: IVb, 46–60.

26 Al-Tabari 1879–1901: II, 844–8, 854; al-Baladhuri 1936:(1938): V, 355ff., 373. Compared with the detailed reports about Ibn al-Zubayr's building, al-Hajjaj's receives quite summary treatment.

27 Al-Yaʿqubi, 1390/1970: II, 273; al-Baladhuri 1936:(1938): V, 373. That ʿAbd al-Malik regretted his reversal of the changes made to the Kaʿba by Ibn al-Zubayr is quite widely reported.

28 McMillan 2011 for a summary and discussion of the material.

29 There are extremely complex discussions in Islamic law about how *ʿumra* may be combined with Hajj. For some aspects of the issue see Gribetz 1994.

30 Wellhausen 1897: 79–84. For the doctrine regarding the *wuquf* see too *EI2*, 'Hadjdj' (A.J. Wensinck).

31 *EI2*, 'Hadjdj' (A.J. Wensinck).

32 Al-Tabari 1879–1901: II, 830; cf. Ibn al-Athir 1851–76, *Kamil*: III, 399 (*s.a.* AH 73!) who adds that in addition to not circumambulating the Kaʿba, al-Hajjaj was unable to make the ritual of running (*saʿy*) between the two hills in Mecca called al-Safa and al-Marwa; furthermore Ibn al-Zubayr could not make Hajj because, as well as missing the *wuquf* at ʿArafa, he was unable to perform the stone throwing rite at the Jimar. Al-Yaʿqubi 1390/1970: II, 2 281 simply says that al-Hajjaj led the Hajj in AH 72/691–2 CE; Ibn ʿAbd Rabbihi 1404: V, 162 says that al-Hajjaj came to Mina and led the Hajj while Ibn al-Zubayr was besieged.

33 Al-Tabari, 1879–1901: II, 830.

34 Al-Baladhuri, 1936:(1938): V, 360. Al-Yaʿqubi 1390/1970: II, 267–8 also has Ibn ʿUmar at Mecca at this time: a moralistic judgment in front of the crucified Ibn al-Zubayr is attributed to him.

35 Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, 3: 400 has the same report, presumably cited from al-Baladhuri.

36 *Qad qadimat wufud Allah min aqtar al-ard yadribuna abat al-ibil wa-yamshuna ʿala aqdamihim*. For the phase *daraba abat*, see Lane, *Lexicon*, s.v. *ibt*. Compare Qurʾan 22:27, 'They will come to you (the Hajj) on foot and on every type of lean camel, proceeding from all directions.'

37 Hadith collections and legal works on Hajj stress that is customary (*sunna*) to circumambulate the Kaʿba on arrival in Mecca and that it is obligatory to do so on the Day of Sacrifices at the end of the Hajj. Those resident in Mecca do not make the initial 'circumambulation of arrival'. (For example, Muhibb al-Din al-Tabari 1390/1970, *Qira*, 261 ff.)

38 Al-Tabari 1879–1901: II, 401–2. al-Baladhuri 1938: IVb, 29 has virtually the same. Al-Yaʿqubi 1390/1970: II, 263 says that in AH 68 (when the Hajj would have been in June 688) there were four banners at ʿArafat: in addition to those of Ibn al-Zubayr and Najda, there were those of Ibn al-Hanafiyya and Banu Umayya.

39 Al-Tabari 1879–1901: I, 2450–52; al-Yaʿqubi 1390/1970: II, 197–8.

40 The accounts of the sending of the army (for example, al-Tabari 1879–1901: II, 405 ff) display a notable inconsistency. Generally, they describe the army being sent in response to a revolt in Medina and make no reference to Ibn al-Zubayr, but sometimes they seem to assume it had been sent against Ibn al-Zubayr in Mecca and make no mention of Medina.

41 For translation and discussion of the so-called Maronite Chronicle that reports this, see Palmer, Hoyland and Brock 1993: especially 31–32, and Hoyland 1997: 125–39.

42 Al-Tabari 1879–1901: II, 92–3; al-Yaʿqubi 1390/1970: II, 238.

43 For statements of this type attributed to Khalid al-Qasri, see *EI2*, 'Khalid al-Kasri' (G.R. Hawting).

44 Al-Yaʿqubi, 1390/1970: II, 238. Al-Tabari does not mention this *ʿumra* of Muʿawiya in this year. Al-Azraqi has various reports mentioning candidates for 'the first to provide a *kiswa* of *dibaj*', some of which attribute it to Muʿawiya, but none mentions this *ʿumra* (al-Azraqi 1389/1969: I, 252 ff). In fact one report saying that Muʿawiya sent *dibaj* to cover the Kaʿba specifies he was in Syria at the time (al-Azraqi 1389/1969: I, 260).

45 Al-Tabari 1879–1901: I, 2528. The information that ʿUmar gave the *ahl al-miyah* permission to build *manazil* between Mecca and Medina, where there had been no buildings previously, is interesting.

46 Al-Tabari treats Ibn al-Zubayr's demolition of the Kaʿba s.a. AH 64/683–4 CE (1879–1901: II, 537) and his rebuilding s.a. AH 65/684–5 CE (1879–1901: II, 592). See too al-Azraqi 1389/1969: I, 201–21; al-Tabari 1879–1901: II, 427; al-Baladhuri 1938: IVb, 55–56 for accounts of the events associated with the rebuilding.

47 For accounts of the rebuilding by Quraysh: al-Azraqi 1389/1969: I, 157–74. For that by al-Hajjaj, al-Baladhuri 1936: V, 373; al-Azraqi 1389/1969: I, 210–11.

48 For example, al-Baladhuri 1938: IVb, 51 ff.

49 For this widely cited hadith, see for example, Bukhari, *Sahih*, *Kitab al-Hajj, bab* 42; ʿAbd al-Razzaq 1390/1970: V, 102 ff. (no. 9106).

50 On the Hijr, see for example, al-Azraqi 1389/1969: I, 311–17; ʿAbd al-Razzaq, 1390/1970: V, 123–32.

51 The stone is perhaps to be explained as a reflection of the fact that Arabic al-Hijr, probably here meaning 'restricted area', also has connotations of 'stone'. For Abraham's prayer for the people of the *balad*, and God's provision of sustenance and fruits for them, see Qurʾan 2:126, 8:26, 14:37, 28:57, and 106:4.

52 Grabar 1959: 46, is right to point out that there is no 'clear-cut' evidence that the Rock was associated with Abraham in ʿAbd al-Malik's time. Note, however, that some of the later 'Merits of Jerusalem' literature transmits a tradition that the horns of the ram provided by God to Abraham as a substitute offering for his son were suspended inside the Dome in the time of ʿAbd al-Malik; the Abbasids subsequently moved them to the Kaʿba (for example, Ibn al-Murajja 1995: 127, with references to other citations; see too, Elad 1995: 52, 160).

53 For the importation of costly material (*wars*, normally the name of a yellow dyestuff, and *qassa*, gypsum? alabaster?), see al-Azraqi 1389/1969: I, 205, 209. For *wars*, see *EI2*, 'wars' (Penelope C. Johnstone).

54 Lüling 1981: 126–61.

55 For further discussion, see Hawting 1984.

56 See the remarks in Hoyland 1997: 550–4 and Robinson 2005: 37–9, 95–100.

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CHAPTER NINETEEN

UMAYYAD JERUSALEM
From a religious capital to a religious town

Suleiman A. Mourad

The city of Jerusalem is crowned with one of the world's most impressive architectural structures, the Dome of the Rock. This octagonal sanctuary, capped by its eponymous dome, has symbolized Islam's unequivocal link to the town that sits at the center of the religious universe of Judaism and Christianity. The Umayyads were literally the architects who cemented Islam's link to Jerusalem with their project of rebuilding the Temple Mount (known in Arabic as the Haram al-Sharif), including the construction of the Dome of the Rock and the Aqsa Mosque (see Figures 19.1 and 19.2). Their religious and political interest in Jerusalem reflected their eagerness to present themselves as protectors and sponsors of the city and addressed both Muslims and Christians, as the two largest communities that they ruled. The Umayyads believed that their patronage would translate into popular support for the dynasty. Hence, the architecture they patronized carried religious symbolisms that resonated with two traditions, and directly shaped one – the long-standing Judeo-Christian tradition and the newly forming Islamic one.

The appropriation of the Judeo-Christian tradition took the form of narratives and practices that were common among Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity. They range from Biblical narratives about Jerusalem and its Temple and Temple Mount, to events and religious lore associated with precise locations and sites there, to pilgrimage and popular veneration. It is true that by the seventh century, the Christians had generally refocused their veneration away from the Temple Mount (a process that had started in the late fourth century). However, Christians still visited at least one location there – the Pinnacle where James the brother of Jesus was killed. As for the Jews, some kept coming to mourn the loss of their Temple at the site of the Foundation Stone (*even ha-shtiyya*).[1] What is not clear is how much of this Judeo-Christian lore the early Muslims knew. Obviously, as early as the eighth century, most of this knowledge became widespread. Before that, one can only speculate that it must have resulted from direct exposure and from the eagerness of Muslims to shape the new religion of Islam in ways that elevated it above its other monotheistic siblings (in the same way Christian groups drew on the ancient Biblical traditions to shape their respective forms of Christianity vis-à-vis Judaism).

With respect to the Islamic tradition, it makes sense to start with the Qurʾan. However, the Qurʾan does not make any explicit reference to Jerusalem. There are

Figure 19.1 Dome of the Rock, with the Dome of the Chain to its left.
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a few references to the Holy Land – for example, as *al-ard al-muqaddasa* (the Holy Land) in Qurʾan 5:21, and as *al-ard allati barakna fiha* (the land which We blessed) in Qurʾan 7:137 and Qurʾan 21:71 – and many other references to Biblical history and figures. Aside from that, there are two instances that have traditionally been assumed to refer directly to Jerusalem: they relate to Muhammad's Night Journey (*al-israʾ*) and the change of the *qibla* (direction of prayer). The former occurs in verse 17:1: 'Glory be to Him who made His servant journey by night from the Sacred Mosque (*al-masjid al-haram*) to the Furthest Mosque (*al-masjid al-aqsa*).' The latter is supposedly encountered in verses 2:142–50, which begins, 'The fools among the people will say, "What has turned them away from the *qibla* which they used to observe?" and ends, "Wherever you come from, turn your face towards the Sacred Mosque (*al-masjid al-haram*) …" '

However, neither of these verses unambiguously refers to Jerusalem. Verse 17:1 does not offer any clarity regarding the location of the Furthest Mosque (*al-masjid al-aqsa*), and seems to denote a sacred area of worship rather than a specific building. Some early Muslim scholars located the Furthest Mosque in heaven, and the link with Jerusalem only gradually became uncontested belief after the early eighth century, when the Aqsa Mosque was built by the Umayyads.[2] Verses 2:142–50, which discuss the change of the direction of prayer (*qibla*) to the Kaʿba (the Sacred Mosque) in

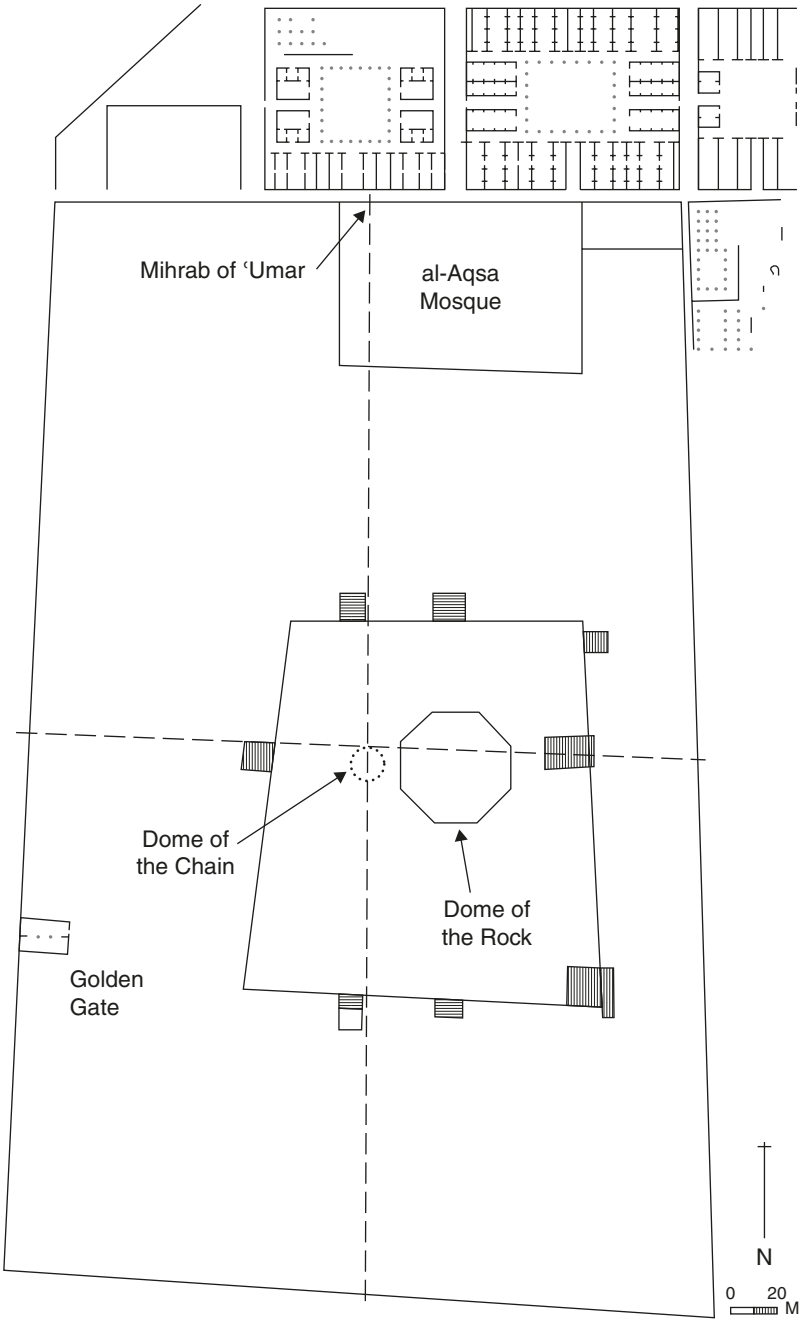

Figure 19.2 Plan of the Temple Mount, with Marwanid-era buildings and imaginary lines of axes (after Rosen-Ayalon).

Based on: A. Marsham (2013) 'The Architecture of Allegiance in Early Islamic Late Antiquity: The Accession of Muʿāwiya in Jerusalem, ca. 661 CE'. In *Court Ceremonies and Rituals of Power in Byzantium and the Medieval Mediterranean: Comparative Perspectives,* edited by A. Beihammer, S. Constantinou and M. Parani, pp. 87–112. Leiden (map at p. 111, in turn based on a map from Myriam Rosen-Ayalon, *The Early Islamic Monuments of Al-Ḥaram Al-Sharīf: An Iconographic Study*. Jerusalem: Institute of Archaeology, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1989).

Mecca, supposedly occurred in the second year of Muhammad's presence in Medina. But here as well, the Qurʾan does not specify the location of the previous *qibla*, and one cannot assume from the Qurʾan alone that it was Jerusalem. Again, over time, this association became cemented in the Islamic religious tradition.[3]

A third association, which also does not have clear Qurʾanic grounding, is Muhammad's Ascension (although some suggest that verses 53:1–18 are where the Qurʾan alludes to it). The location where it occurred was contested in early Islamic scholarship. Most early Muslim scholars distinguished it from the Night Journey and located it vertically above Mecca.[4] The earliest source that collated together separate narratives to produce the story of the Night Journey and Ascension seems to be Ibn Ishaq (d. 767), in his biography (*Sira*) of Muhammad.[5] Yet, once the connection to Jerusalem was cemented, the literature remained inconclusive about the precise location in the Haram of Jerusalem from which Muhammad supposedly ascended to Heaven. Much later, the Dome of the Ascension (a small dome with supporting columns likely recycled from Crusader buildings) was erected to the west of the Dome of the Rock, sometime after Saladin recaptured Jerusalem in 1187.[6]

It is important to note that the expression *al-masjid al-aqsa* is often mistakenly understood to mean specifically the mosque that was begun in 705 and called Aqsa. More often than not, when Islamic sources speak of the 'Aqsa Mosque', they in fact refer to the entire Haram. If one accepts that Qurʾan 17:1 indeed refers to the Furthest Mosque as a place in Jerusalem, then it could not mean a structure because there was no mosque or structure of any kind that could be called a mosque on the Temple Mount of Jerusalem at that time. Interestingly, the verse also does not specify the Kaʿba as the place of departure, but rather speaks of *al-masjid al-haram* to mean the entire Haram of Mecca that includes the Kaʿba, and where also no mosque existed at the time.

Aside from the ambiguity that one gets from the Qurʾan, Islamic scholarship also offers a confusing picture about what precisely is the 'Aqsa Mosque'. For instance, in his description of Jerusalem, the geographer Ibn Hawqal (d. after 977) says:

> In Jerusalem, there is a mosque that has no equal in size anywhere else in the realm of Islam. On its southern side, in the western corner of the mosque, there is a roofed structure that extends half the width of the mosque. The rest of the mosque is not built, except for another structure atop the Rock, where that elevated stone sits like a solid mass. It is massively huge, and its surface is uneven. Above the Rock is a high and rounded dome coated with a thick cover of lead. Underneath this dome, there is this Rock whose height from the floor reaches up to a standing person's chest; it is known as the Rock of Moses. Its length and width are almost equal. Around it, there is a stone barrier that reaches to a person's waist; its radius measures in the teens of yards. One can descend into this Rock through a narrow opening that leads to a cave measuring around 5 by 10 yards. The ceiling is not high and the surface is neither round nor square, but one can stand comfortably in it.[7]

Ibn Hawqal, who was writing in the second half of the tenth century, makes it very clear that what he meant by mosque (Arabic, *masjid*) was the entire Haram area. The actual place of prayer – which he calls a structure (*binaʾ*) – was secondary

in comparison to the Dome of the Rock and the wider Haram. Al-Tabari (d. 923) displays a similar ambiguity when he relates two reports about the entry of Caliph ʿUmar b. al-Khattab (r. 634–44) into the Temple Mount. One narrative says that ʿUmar 'proceeded to enter the Mosque', and the other 'he stood at the door of the Mosque'.[8] Again, there was no such thing as a *mosque* there when ʿUmar purportedly visited the area. Indeed, the ambiguity in the expression 'Aqsa Mosque' remained even into the Crusader period, with such works as al-Qasim b. ʿAsakir's *Kitab al-Mustaqsa fi fadaʾil al-Masjid al-Aqsa*, where the term 'Aqsa Mosque' specifically indicates the Dome of the Rock.[9] So, in Ibn Hawqal, al-Tabari and many other historians and writers, unless the language is unequivocally indicating a mosque in the classical sense (a built structure for prayers), the Aqsa Mosque usually means the entire Haram, and can even refer to the Dome of the Rock.[10]

The ambiguities of the Qurʾanic texts contribute strongly to a sense that the sacred status of Jerusalem in Islam was shaped, and perhaps even instigated, by the Umayyads. Furthermore, the massive construction project of the Haram, including the construction of the Dome of the Rock and the Aqsa Mosque, left an ambiguity in the later Islamic sources, with the wider Temple Mount, or indeed the whole city, sometimes being referred to as the Aqsa Mosque. Something similar can also be seen in the use of the expression *Bayt al-Maqdis* (and sometimes *al-Bayt al-Muqaddas*) which indicates either the Temple or its specific site, all of the Temple Mount area, or the entire city of Jerusalem.[11]

In what follows, developments under three Umayyad caliphs, Muʿawiya (r. 661–80), ʿAbd al-Malik (r. 685–705) and al-Walid (r. 705–15) are examined in detail, with particular attention to construction activity in and around the Temple Mount. It is argued that Jerusalem already held religious and political significance during the reign of Muʿawiya, reaching its climax after his reign, during the period of the erection and completion of the Dome of the Rock and the Aqsa Mosque. After that, the Umayyad patronage persisted as evidenced by the frequent presence of Umayyad caliphs and by the Umayyad palaces. But it should be noted that starting with the reign of Caliph al-Walid b. ʿAbd al-Malik (r. 705–15) the Umayyads became invested in other cities as well: Mecca for religious reasons, and, starting in the reign of Sulayman b. ʿAbd al-Malik (r. 715–17), Ramla, which became the political center in Palestine. This, however, should not be understood to mean that Jerusalem faded into insignificance.

MUʿAWIYA

According to both Islamic and non-Islamic sources Muʿawiya (r. 661–80 CE) chose to be proclaimed caliph in Jerusalem precisely because of the city's political and religious symbolism.[12] *The Maronite Chronicle*, which is the closest source to the event, specifies that when Muʿawiya came to Jerusalem, he prayed at the Golgotha, and then visited Gethsemane where he prayed at the tomb of Mary. Al-Maqdisi specifies that Muʿawiya received the pledge of allegiance as caliph in the mosque.[13] According to al-Maqdisi, this was a mosque previously built (or rebuilt) by Jacob, al-Khidr, David, Solomon, and others, including the caliph ʿUmar. Muʿawiya's choice to be declared caliph in Jerusalem, even though he belonged to one of the most prestigious and powerful families of Mecca, indeed attests to Jerusalem's political and religious significance. However, one cannot accept al-Maqdisi's statement that ʿUmar built the

mosque and then Muʿawiya did the same, because it is very late and his use of the terms 'build' and 'mosque' are too vague and imprecise: Jacob did not build a mosque anywhere on the Temple Mount, and neither al-Khidr nor David. One adds here the fact, discussed earlier, that the Muslims generally referred to the entire Haram as 'mosque', thus 'building a mosque' could simply mean ordering some repairs to the Temple Mount, and not necessarily building a specific structure.

Supposedly, a Muslim space for prayer is described in two Christian sources from after 670: the sections added to John Moschus' *Pratum spirituale*,[14] and Adomnán's *De Locis sanctis* (where he alleges he reported information told to him by a certain Arculf who supposedly visited Jerusalem).[15] If one were to accept the authenticity of what is being discussed in these two sources as coming from the 670s, both reports associate the Muslims' prayer space with the site of the old Temple, not on the south-western edge of the Temple Mount esplanade. So, if a mosque ever existed before the Aqsa Mosque was built during the reign of al-Walid, it was likely adjacent to the Rock.

Of all the structures on the Haram, it is likely that the Dome of the Chain was erected during the reign of Muʿawiya, although one cannot completely dismiss the possibility that he did so when he was still governor.[16] The Dome of the Chain is an open structure with a dome standing on 11 outer columns, and six inner columns. It has been suggested that it was the model for the Dome of the Rock or functioned as a treasury,[17] both of which can be easily dismissed since the structure features an open upper space below the dome unsuitable to keep a treasury, and its plan is distinctively different from that of the Dome of the Rock.[18] Its location, on the exact center of the Haram, might suggest that it was intended to convey the first Muslims' claim to the area, and carry some eschatological undertones. If this is correct, then it is likely this structure that is being described by contemporary sources as the Muslims' mosque.

ʿABD AL-MALIK

The Dome of the Rock is a magnificent structure, both in terms of its design and its elaborate ornamentation. It was completed around 692 (and definitely before 695), built by order of the Umayyad Caliph ʿAbd al-Malik (r. 685–705). The inscriptions on the inner octagonal arcade of the Dome of the Rock give the building's date as 72 of the Hijra which corresponds to the period between June 691 and May 692 CE. Some scholars have argued that this date refers to the commissioning of the building and not to its completion;[19] although one can dispute such a view on the basis that it lacks solid evidence and that for the inscription to be placed in that location, the structure must have been mostly finished. It has been suggested that the design was influenced by the style used for Christian churches and martyriums in Palestine.[20] The discovery in 1992 of the Kathisma Church (fifth and sixth centuries) a few miles to the south of Jerusalem on the road to Bethlehem offers the most exact comparison in terms of architecture and function.[21]

The inscription inside the Dome of the Rock allows us to detect signs of an emerging new religion,[22] and the motivations for its construction. We find there one of the earliest forms of the classical *shahada* (testimony of faith), and the emphatic emphasis on God's oneness: 'There is no god but God, One with no partners.' We find the emphasis on the prophethood of Muhammad. We also find the earliest dated

citations of the Qurʾan in inscription (for example, Qurʾan 3:18–19, 4:171–2, 19:33–6, and 112:1–4). The importance of these particular Qurʾanic verses is that they dispute the divinity of Jesus, and therefore point to one of the reasons for the construction of the Dome of the Rock: to signal the claim that is being made for Islam on the city of Jerusalem, contesting the legitimacy of the Christian claim.[23]

However, as with so many such important sacred sites, one should not be eager to single out *the* reason that triggered ʿAbd al-Malik and the Muslims to build the Dome of the Rock and launch the massive renovation of the Haram in Jerusalem. Christian sources, as seen earlier, attest that the Muslims were already coming to pray at the site of the ancient Temple, a claim corroborated by some Muslim sources, which add that the Dome of the Rock was built to shelter the Muslim worshippers.[24] There is also an emphasis on the sanctity of the Rock, which derived from its Biblical and even pre-Creation associations. In contrast, as noted above, there is no evidence that the belief that Muhammad ascended to Heaven from the Rock existed during the early Umayyad period. As for whether ʿAbd al-Malik was rebuilding the Temple, it does not seem to have credible supporting evidence, as will be discussed below.

Another explanation focuses on the association of the Rock with the Day of Resurrection. The earliest *fadaʾil* narratives focus on this theme.[25] Moreover, the inscription on the inner arcade of the Dome of the Rock makes reference to Muhammad's intercession on behalf of the Muslims on the Day the Judgment, so it can be said that at the time of construction the eschatological association of the spot with the Day of Judgment was present in the Muslim imagination. Additional, compelling evidence comes from the presence of the Dome of the Chain, which is located a few feet away to the east, and which, as noted above, is considered to be the oldest Islamic structure on the Haram.[26] The Dome of the Chain is linked in some Islamic narratives to an extra-biblical legend of the chain of justice of King David or King Solomon, which was located in front of the Temple and used as a divine mechanism to judge among the ancient Israelites.[27] But it is unlikely that the Muslims understood their building as a backward-looking replica. Much more plausible, as mentioned earlier, is that they meant it as a sign of the eschatological future: the Chain symbolizing the judgment to be, without it being necessarily an imminent one.

The other justification for the construction of the Dome of the Rock that is advanced in medieval chronicles (by the likes of al-Yaʿqubi and Ibn al-Batriq) – and discredited in some modern scholarship – states that ʿAbd al-Malik wanted the Dome of the Rock to be used as a pilgrimage site in lieu of the Kaʿba in Mecca, when the latter was under the control of his rival, Caliph Ibn al-Zubayr. This opinion has been dismissed on the grounds that it reflects a bias against the Umayyads on the part of pro-Shiʿa or pro-Abbasid historians, and on the basis that the specific assertion that ʿAbd al-Malik's intention was to divert the hajj away from Mecca is a clear manifestation of such bias, since it was so contrary to Islamic practice.[28] But entirely dismissing this view is problematic because the rationale for refuting it stems from an improper understanding of the fluidity of early Islamic creeds and rituals.[29]

It is unquestionable that the Muslims came on pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Muslims went on pilgrimage to a variety of destinations (a practice that remained throughout Islamic history and goes on even today).[30] Furthermore, many Muslims who did so did not necessarily make a pilgrimage to Mecca, or saw their alternative pilgrimage as necessarily a replacement to the one to Mecca. Judging from a variety of later Muslim testimonies,

the rituals that were performed on the Haram area ranged from *taʿrif* (the customary prayer-while-standing that is part of the pilgrimage ceremony in Mecca on the day when pilgrims visit Mount ʿArafa, which was a widespread practice during the Umayyad period, convened in most major cities) to prayers and liturgical readings associated with specific sites.[31] ʿAbd al-Malik could have ordered the development of the Haram, and especially the building of the Dome of the Rock, because it was a destination of pilgrimage, without this having had anything to do with the pilgrimage to Mecca. But, given that the primacy of Mecca as Islam's holiest city was still in flux at the time, rivalry with Mecca cannot be ruled out as one of the reasons for its construction.

One further thing has not been examined with any seriousness regarding the reasons for building the Dome of the Rock. It is the actual name of the structure. It is a dome on top of the Rock. If ʿAbd al-Malik understood his mission as rebuilding the Temple, he would have called the structure by some other name. 'The Dome of the Rock' (Arabic, *qubbat al-sakhra*) celebrates the Rock itself. Aside from the name, the *fadaʾil* narratives bring overwhelming support to this suggestion in terms of the unambiguous focus on the sanctity of the Rock and its significance from the time God created Earth (as His throne and as the spot from which He ascended back to Heaven) to the Day of Resurrection (when the Rock will welcome the Kaʿba and Humanity will line up for judgment on either side of it).[32]

There is no doubt that the link between the Rock and the Biblical Temple and Biblical history was not lost on the Muslims. But what the *fadaʾil* literature adds attests to a very important layer of legends that deal with the Rock alone; probably this came out of Jewish lore that focused on the Foundation Stone (*even ha-shtiyya*) after the destruction of the Temple, and which was intended as a substitute for the loss of the Temple. It is here that one sees a difference in focus regarding the sacredness of the Haram area: in the period between the destruction of the Temple in 70 and Muslims' conquest of Jerusalem in *c.* 637, the Temple Mount (as the broad sacred area) and the Rock (as the specific focused site) became enshrined in Jewish religious imagination as holding the sanctity that was once invested in the Temple. How much of that the Muslims understood in the period before the construction of the Dome of the Rock can be debatable, and one can argue that some of it reflected the Muslims' eagerness to come up with more testimonies about the Rock's sacredness after the building was erected. Yet, there is no doubt that ʿAbd al-Malik and the Muslims were engaging new meanings for the site that were not necessarily the ones of the distant Biblical past.[33]

In this light, it is not surprising that we find early Muslim narrators thinking of the Rock whenever they reflected on Biblical narratives and history. This is completely against what Biblical history and narratives say. The Rock that the Muslims revere does not exist in the Bible. It emerges in Jewish practice and Rabbinical lore only after the Temple is gone.

The example below gives an idea of the glosses that Muslims made on Biblical material in order to bring out an association with the Rock:

> It is written in the Torah that God said to Abraham: 'O Abraham.' He replied: 'Here I am.' [God said:] 'Take your only son, the one you love, go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there on one of the mountains that I shall show

> you.' His [God's] saying, 'the land of Moriah' means Jerusalem, and 'one of the mountains' means the Rock.[34]

What we see here is an Islamic *midrash* on the Bible that tries to channel holiness to its precise epicenter: the Rock.

Last, there is one additional theory that has been posited, namely that ʿAbd al-Malik was rebuilding the Temple.[35] It is based on a unique account attributed to Kaʿb al-Ahbar (d. *c.* 652–6) that speaks of a prophecy that God would send ʿAbd al-Malik to rebuild and ornament the Rock of Jerusalem.[36] This particular report is problematic in two ways. First, there is every reason to believe that the report attributed to Kaʿb al-Ahbar was attributed to him at a later period in Umayyad history since Kaʿb died long before ʿAbd al-Malik reached adulthood.[37] Second, if ʿAbd al-Malik and the Muslims had believed that the caliph was rebuilding the Temple, then one would expect the *fadaʾil* literature to reflect that with more than one report, which is not the case. One would also expect the inscription on the inner arcade to evoke something to that effect, which it does not.

AL-WALID

It is likely that ʿAbd al-Malik had envisioned a complete plan for the Haram, but we are not sure that his vision extended to the other parts of Jerusalem. At any rate, the role of his son al-Walid (r. 705–15) in seeing this plan through and adding his own marks are undeniable. The building of the Aqsa Mosque was completed around 710 CE, during al-Walid's reign. The Aqsa Mosque conveys the most unequivocal and unambiguous message of the Islamic character of the Haram. Al-Walid also had a significant role in envisioning Jerusalem as a royal city of some sort, which is seen in the construction of a palace and other structures adjacent to the Aqsa Mosque, during his reign and after it. Taken together, the major projects undertaken by 'Abd al-Malik and al-Walid demonstrate the attention they paid to Jerusalem and the transformative impact of their patronage in cementing Jerusalem's religious status in Islam. They also show that Umayyad Jerusalem extended much more to the south than previously believed.[38]

As noted above, lacking archaeological and contemporary historical evidence, the existence of a mosque prior to the reign of Muʿawiya, and even ʿAbd al-Malik, is speculative at best. It is often argued that the Aqsa Mosque was first built by caliph ʿUmar,[39] which is based on much later reports. In this connection, one also needs to recall the discussion above about the confusion of the expression *al-masjid al-aqsa* and that in early Islam more often than not it meant the entire Haram area and not a precise mosque structure. Having said this, there is no reason to doubt the story of ʿUmar's visit to Jerusalem when the Muslims captured it around 637, and his efforts to clean the Temple Mount, and identify a spot for communal prayer. If one were to accept what the additions to John Moschus' *Pratum spirituale* and Adomnán's *De Locis sanctis* report as coming from the 670s, they attest only, as discussed earlier, to the presence of an ordinary structure or a designated space for prayer very close to the Rock, not on the location where the Aqsa Mosque was built.

Figure 19.3 Ruins of the Umayyad Palaces, with the Aqsa Mosque in the background. © S.A. Mourad.

Aside from the Aqsa Mosque, al-Walid also ordered the construction of a palace, located below the southern wall of the Aqsa Mosque (Figure 19.3). It forms part of a built complex on the southwestern corner and along the southern side of the Haram that was discovered during excavations by different archaeological teams in the years 1961–63, 1968–78 and 1994–96. This complex comprises structures, unmentioned in the literary sources, believed to represent two palaces and two administrative buildings. There seem to be traces of two other incomplete structures adjacent to them as well. They were all built during the Umayyad period, starting in the reign of al-Walid.[40]

The buildings have a broadly similar plan: a square structure with an inner open courtyard. The first palace has two stories and is located directly below the southern wall of the newly built Aqsa Mosque. The quality of the workmanship of the masonry and its frescos, along with the fact that it has direct access to the Aqsa Mosque, suggests that it was likely built as a residence for al-Walid. Indeed, several papyri from Egypt (dating to the period 706–14) speak of Egyptian laborers sent to Jerusalem to work at the construction sites of the mosque and the caliph's palace.[41] The other palace is to the west of the main palace, and is a little larger. It could have been intended as the governor's residence (*dar al-imara*). Along with the other buildings, they date to after al-Walid's reign and were likely used for governance purposes. Indeed, although it had been thought that they were destroyed in the 749 earthquake, these Umayyad palaces and buildings lasted until the eleventh century and their use probably in fact diminished as a result of the earthquake of 1033.[42]

THE *FADAʾIL* LITERATURE DURING THE UMAYYAD PERIOD

The Muslim pilgrimage to Jerusalem to pray at several sacred sites there, especially the Rock, along with the major construction works undertaken on the Haram by ʿAbd al-Malik and al-Walid gave rise to the *fadaʾil* of Jerusalem literature which underscored the religious significance to the Muslims of the many sites on the Haram and around Jerusalem that they visited. One can describe it as an economy of demand-and-supply: on the one hand, we have a popular need for information about what made those places sacred; on the other hand, we have preachers and scholars, some of whom were employed by the Umayyads, producing and disseminating such information. Moreover, one should expect that some of the factors that triggered this demand-and-supply could have been shaped in imitation of the pilgrimage Jews and Christians undertook to the holy city, and the legends they circulated about Jerusalem's sacredness. We see the reverse of this happening a few centuries later (that is, Christian attachment to sacred sites in imitation of the Muslims), when the Crusaders seized Jerusalem in 1099 and confiscated the Dome of the Rock, calling it the Temple of God and reintroducing it as a principal sacred spot in Jerusalem alongside the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, as well as linking specific spots to Biblical/Christian figures.[43]

One can even argue that it was during the Umayyad period that this literature started to form. Local scholars in Jerusalem took the lead in promoting and disseminating *fadaʾil* narratives, although we also have material that originated elsewhere. It is not farfetched that the Umayyads themselves could have had a hand in developing and shaping some of its features. For instance, it is reported that al-Zuhri (d. 742), who was very much involved in shaping the Umayyad religious program, confronted a local preacher in the Aqsa Mosque who was recounting the *fadaʾil* of Jerusalem when the latter refused to acknowledge the link of the place to the Qurʾanic verse 17:1.[44]

On the basis of the *fadaʾil* narratives, it is clear that the Dome of the Rock and by extension the entire Haram are linked to the Biblical Temple and Biblical history (David, Solomon, the first Temple, and so on), and even back to pre-Creation when God molded the Earth. There is as well the association with Mary and Jesus, and several eschatological scenarios preceding the Day of Judgment.[45] What is totally new is the development of what can be described as 'exclusive' Islamic links to Jerusalem that resulted from the Muslims' own experiences and association with the city, and which were not the by-product of the Judeo-Christian tradition: for example, the link of the Haram of Jerusalem (*masjid bayt al-maqdis*) to Muhammad's Night Journey, the relocation to Jerusalem of Muhammad's Ascension, the visit of ʿUmar and his prayer on particular locations on the Haram, a Muslim accidentally accessing Paradise through the cave underneath the Rock (see Figure 19.4), the disputation between ʿUmar and Kaʿb al-Ahbar as to whether to pray north or south of the Rock, and so forth.[46] Interestingly, what is largely missing from the earliest *fadaʾil* literature, but which we find in more traditional historiography from the Abbasid period,[47] is the circumstances of the destruction of the Temple. There is the problematic report attributed to Kaʿb discussed above. And there is the famous prophecy of Jesus: 'God will destroy the stones of this mosque because of the sins of its people.'[48] What are completely absent are reports about its actual destruction.

Figure 19.4 The Cave under the Rock.
© S.A. Mourad.

THE UMAYYADS' DIMINISHED INTEREST?

The interest in Jerusalem did not wane after the caliphate of al-Walid. The palaces and buildings discussed earlier, whose existence is not encountered in the literary sources, prove beyond any doubt the Umayyads' sustained investment in the city. Moreover, it is reported that upon being elevated to caliph, ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAziz arranged for the high officials of his predecessor Sulayman b. ʿAbd al-Malik in all of Palestine to take an oath to him in front of the Rock in Jerusalem.[49] If such a thing did happen, it gives an additional proof of the continued political and religious significance of Jerusalem to the Umayyads.

That Jerusalem sustained itself as a significant religious and political center for the Umayyads does not necessarily mean that they did not consider other cities as equally important or worth investing in for a variety of reasons. Indeed, as al-Walid was investing wealth in the Aqsa Mosque and the palace in Jerusalem, he was renovating and enlarging the Great Mosque of Damascus, the Prophet's mosque in Medina and the Haram in Mecca.

The end of the Umayyad era did trigger a decline in the status of Jerusalem. The city did not lose its religious significance. On the contrary, Jerusalem's religious importance remained, which is seen in the popular practice of adding a mandatory stop in it as part of the Hajj ritual (which also included a stop in Medina that was not part of the 'original' pilgrimage). Here, irrespective of the reasons that could have motivated Muʿawiya, ʿAbd al-Malik, al-Walid and other Umayyad caliphs to order massive construction projects for

the Haram, one needs to keep in mind the fact that the Umayyads saw themselves as the architects of Islam at a time when Islam itself was still very fluid. As God's caliphs, they were rather shaping Islam. The motivations that caused their interest in Jerusalem could have changed over time, in part perhaps precisely because of the transformative impact of their religious policies and projects. The Haram with the Dome of the Rock and the Aqsa Mosque gained meanings and significance that were not there when they came to power. In this respect, the Umayyads made Jerusalem an Islamic city, and their legacy is that ever since, the Muslims have not been able to think of Jerusalem as other than that, often with the recognition that others have a claim to it too – a claim which at the same time does not diminish their own.

NOTES

1 Tsafrir 2009.
2 Busse 1991, and Kister 1980: 189–90.
3 Rubin 2008: 350–51.
4 See, for instance, Ibn Sa'd 1958: 1.213–15 and al-Tabari 1969: 2.307–309. See also Busse 1991 and van Ess 1999.
5 Ibn Hisham 1990: 29–38; Ibn Ishaq (1955).
6 Elad 1995: 48–50 and 73–6; Kedar and Pringle 2009: 141–2.
7 Ibn Hawqal 1938: 171.
8 Al-Tabari 1969: 610–11.
9 Mourad 2010.
10 It is possible that the medieval Muslim historians were aware there was no 'mosque' there in the time of Muhammad and understood the reference to indicate the whole Haram platform.
11 *EI2*, 'al-Kuds. A. 2. Names' (O. Grabar).
12 Marsham 2009 and 2013.
13 Quoted in Marsham 2013: 97.
14 Hoyland 1997: 63.
15 Doubts have been raised about the trustworthiness of Adomnán's report, especially the 'eyewitness" report of Arculf: see the discussion in Nees 2015: 33–57.
16 Nees 2015: 96–9.
17 Rosen-Ayalon 1989: 26–27.
18 Nees 2015: 61.
19 Blair 1992; Milwright 2016.
20 Grabar 1959; Chen 1999.
21 Avner 2011.
22 Grabar 1996; Milwright 2016.
23 See, for instance, Grabar 1959: 53–6, and Milwright 2016: 239–40.
24 Mourad 2008: 94–5.
25 On which, see further below in this chapter.
26 Nees 2015: 58–99.
27 Elad 1995: 47–8. To my knowledge, no such chain of justice on the Temple Mount is known from Jewish or Christian lore before Islam. The legend of the chain of King David or King Solomon could very likely have been an Islamic invention, based on the structure on which Solomon stood during the dedication of the Temple, referenced in 2 Chronicles 6.13.
28 This view was first advanced in Goitein 1966.
29 Robinson 2005: 95–100; Elad 2008: 192–3.

30 See the sources discussed in Kister 1980 about the hadiths encouraging Muslims to make a pilgrimage to a few sacred places. I am using the word pilgrimage in a broad sense, and therefore it is not restricted to the Hajj pilgrimage to Mecca.
31 Elad 2008: 170–9; Elad, 1995; Hasson, 1996.
32 Mourad 2008.
33 Nees 2015.
34 Abu al-Maʿali 1995: 115–16.
35 For example, Busse 1998: 25.
36 al-Wasiti 1978: 86, and Abu al-Maʿali 1995: 63–4.
37 Rabbat 1989, Mourad 2008.
38 Rosen-Ayalon 2006: 43.
39 Kaplony 2009; Marsham 2013: 97–100.
40 Prag 2008: 101–6; Avni 2014: 134–6.
41 Prag 2008: 104; Elad 2008: 210; the cautious note by Prag that the papyri offer only 'circumstantial' evidence that the palace they refer to was in Jerusalem is to be rejected as a mistake on his part. Following Elad, the documents clearly name al-Walid and reference his mosque and palace in Jerusalem.
42 Prag 2008: 104. Cf. Avni 2014: 137; Magness 2003: 159–61.
43 Kedar and Pringle 2009: 136–42.
44 al-Wasiti 1978: 102, Mourad 2008: 96–7.
45 Mourad 2008, 2010.
46 Mourad 2008, 2010.
47 See, for instance, al-Tabari 1969: 1.538–57. Al-Tabari too, like many other historians, did not say much about the destruction of the second Temple, only stating that Titus destroyed it in revenge of the Jews killing Jesus: al-Tabari 1969: 1.606.
48 al-Wasiti 1978: 60; Abu al-Maʿali 1995: 230.
49 Ibn al-Mundhir 2004: 4:217; Marsham 2009, 135.

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PART V

RELIGION AND IDENTITY IN THE MATERIAL EVIDENCE

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CHAPTER TWENTY

ARABIC ROCK INSCRIPTIONS UP TO 750 CE

Ilkka Lindstedt

INTRODUCTION

This chapter surveys Islamic-era Arabic rock inscriptions from the earliest such inscriptions until the fall of the Umayyad dynasty, that is, AH 23–132/643–750 CE.[1] There are some 100 dated inscriptions from that era that are known to me.[2] There are hundreds or thousands more undated early Islamic inscriptions, but dating them with any precision is difficult.

Only lapidary inscriptions will be dealt with here, as Sheila Blair has discussed inscriptions on portable items extensively.[3] The corpus of rock inscriptions has grown greatly in recent years, especially thanks to the efforts of Saudi scholars, and the epigraphic corpus forms a very important set of evidence for early Islamic piety.[4] There are two valuable Internet resources that help students of Arabic epigraphy to engage with the material. First, there is the *islamic-awareness.org* website, which has, among other material, a number of early inscriptions, with pictures.[5] However, although a fine resource, the site includes some errors and many of the interpretations advanced on the basis of epigraphic material are tendentious. Second, there is the *Thésaurus d'épigraphie islamique*.[6] Previously published on CD-ROM,[7] the website brings the material to the twenty-first century in an accessible form. The website requires registration but otherwise can be freely used. The *Thésaurus* strives to be all-encompassing, but not all publications of early Arabic epigraphy are included as yet. Furthermore, there are some other problems with the *Thésaurus*: for example some of the portable items are fakes, and translations are not provided for the texts. However, both sites are constantly updated. Many inscriptions are published in hard-to-get journals or volumes, which makes keeping track of all of them hard, and here websites are immensely helpful.

To concentrate only on Umayyad-era inscriptions in this article is, of course, to some extent arbitrary: the early Abbasid era does not bring about a great change concerning the themes or formulae of the inscriptions, whether graffiti or monumental. Nor is there a sudden change in palaeography, although a new hand, so-called 'floral Kufic', is developed in the ninth century.[8]

Nevertheless, a focus on the Umayyad era is helpful. As the other contributions in this book spell out, the Arabic literary sources that we have at our disposal are all in their present form from the Abbasid era (some non-Arabic sources are contemporary

with the Umayyads).[9] Moreover, Umayyad-era documentary evidence (papyri, coins, inscriptions, archaeological remains) is not very voluminous, and inscriptions form a very important set of sources among them. Interestingly, the majority of early inscriptions are graffiti, that is, non-monumental inscriptions. They were not usually written by famous religious scholars or tribal leaders but by people whose names do not appear in chronicles or other literary sources.[10] Thus, they give us an important opportunity to deal with religious beliefs at the time and among groups beyond the purview of our later sources. Monumental inscriptions, too, are significant evidence, revealing to us the caliphs and princes who wanted to portray themselves as great builders of palaces and roads.

PRE-ISLAMIC ARABIC INSCRIPTIONS

Before turning to the Islamic-era inscriptions, it may be worthwhile to list the pre-Islamic Arabic inscriptions known to scholarship, since the interpretation of many of them has changed in recent years. The discussion here is brief.[11] The following pre-Islamic inscriptions are generally considered to be Arabic (more precisely, Old Arabic) completely or partially:

- The long funerary inscription of ʿIgl bn Hfʿm, in Sabaic script, possibly first century BCE.[12]
- JSLih 384, four lines, in Dadanitic script, undated.
- JSLih 276, one line, in Dadanitic script, undated.
- The ʿĒn ʿAvdat inscription, three lines in Aramaic and two lines in Arabic (although hard to interpret), Nabataean script, undated.
- JSNab 17, nine lines, mixed Aramaic-Arabic text, Nabataean script, dated to 267 CE.
- A recently published inscription A1, seven lines, Greek script, possibly third–fourth centuryCE.[13]
- The Nemara inscription, five long lines, Nabataean script, dated to *kslwl* 223 of the era of the Roman province of Arabia, corresponding to November–December 328 CE.
- A number of mixed, Aramaic-Arabic texts written in a late variety of the Nabataean script, some with explicit dates from the fifth century;[14] these show undeniably that the Arabic script is derived from the Nabataean script.[15]
- The Zebed inscription, merely names, Arabic script, dated to 512 CE.
- The Jabal Usays inscription, four lines, Arabic script, dated to 528 CE.
- The Harran inscription, four lines, Arabic script, dated to 568 CE.

The last three are the only pre-Islamic inscriptions that are written in Arabic in characteristically Arabic script. Incidentally, the new finds from Saudi Arabia of inscriptions in late Nabataean script belonging probably to between the first and fifth centuries CE[16] let us trace the development of the Nabataean script into the Arabic one without interruption.

Other texts, not included in the list, such as JSLih 71 or the two Hismaic texts from Madaba, seem to contain some elements of Arabic but their exact linguistic definition is still controversial.[17] Indeed, the definition of Arabic itself is debated. Al-Jallad has

recently suggested that specimens of the so-called Ancient North Arabian language bundle, specifically Safaitic and Hismaic, should be considered part of the Old Arabic continuum.[18] This was previously disputed by Macdonald,[19] especially because the definite article in Safaitic and Hismaic is not normally *ʾl-*, but *h-* in Safaitic, whereas Hismaic does not seem to have used an article at all. Al-Jallad has identified a number of Arabic isoglosses – or geographic boundaries of linguistic change – that also occur in Safaitic, concluding that this fact makes Safaitic, from a linguistic perspective, Old Arabic.[20] Moreover, the definite article *ʾl-* occurs in some Safaitic inscriptions. In any case, research on these matters is still ongoing, but if Safaitic and Hismaic inscriptions were classified as Arabic, this would greatly broaden our corpus of pre-Islamic Arabic inscriptions, since Safaitic inscriptions are known in their tens of thousands and Hismaic inscriptions in their thousands.

Three inscriptions that have been considered Arabic in older scholarship but are, however, *not* Arabic and should be removed from our corpus of pre-Islamic Arabic inscriptions. These have been treated and reinterpreted by Hoyland 2010. The first is a mosaic from a sixth-century church at Mount Nebo, Jordan. Previously thought to have been Arabic, the inscription is in all probability Syriac. Second, the Jabal Ramm inscription is not Arabic but actually consists of two Nabataean Aramaic inscriptions. Finally, the Umm al-Jimal inscription is more or less illegible and, at this point of research, should be excluded from the Arabic corpus, although the question can be revisited if someone is able to put forward a convincing interpretation of the text.[21]

THE PROVENANCE OF THE INSCRIPTIONS

Arabic inscriptions until AH 132/750 CE have been found in a wide variety of places. However, and perhaps surprisingly, Umayyad-era epigraphy has not been found west of Egypt or east or north of Iraq, as far as I am aware. Iran or Central Asia have, thus, yielded no early Arabic inscriptions, even though speakers of Arabic settled there early on. Oman or the eastern parts of the Arabian Peninsula have not produced anything either. Furthermore, only one Umayyad-era inscription has been found in Iraq: this is dated to AH 64/684 CE and was found at Hafnat al-Abyad, near Karbala.[22] It is likely that this is affected by the scope of epigraphic surveys, which have been difficult or impossible in Iraq, for example. Medieval and modern rebuilding has probably also destroyed much epigraphic material. A lack of suitable writing material could mean that, in some places in the Arabic-Islamic world, the epigraphic habit was much less common than in others. For example basalt stone, which is rather easy to engrave on and in which inscriptions can survive for centuries or millennia with no weathering, is found in Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Syria, but not in great quantities in Iraq. The most important Umayyad era and undated early epigraphic material are the following, organized on the basis of countries (in alphabetic order) where inscriptions have been found:

- Egypt: for some reason, Egypt has yielded mostly gravestones.[23]
- Iraq: only one Umayyad-era inscription.[24]
- Israel and Palestine: a wide variety of graffiti, building inscriptions and milestones.[25]

- Jordan: hundreds of early graffiti as well as some gravestones and monumental inscriptions.[26]
- Lebanon: early inscriptions (all graffiti) have been found at only one site, ʿAnjar.[27]
- The Mediterranean localities of Kos and Knide have yielded a couple of early graffiti.[28]
- Saudi Arabia: hundreds, probably thousands, of early graffiti and some monumental inscriptions.[29]
- Syria: dozens of early graffiti and some monumental inscriptions.[30]
- Yemen: some early graffiti.[31]

It can be seen that Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Syria as well as Israel and Palestine have been the most important regions for epigraphic material. It would be beneficial to carry out more fieldwork outside these countries. Many early Arabic inscriptions might be uncovered in Iran and Central Asia, for example. The same holds true for Maghrib, and not many surveys have been undertaken in the eastern parts of the Arabian Peninsula. Recent finds of new early inscriptions of utmost importance show that there must still be many unpublished inscriptions.[32]

The first 200 years of the Islamic era were a time when the epigraphic habit, especially graffito-writing, was very common. Imbert remarks that in the case of his corpus of pre-modern Arabic epigraphy from Jordan, the seventh, eighth, and ninth centuries CE produced the majority of the corpus.[33] The tenth, eleventh, and twelfth centuries are all but devoid of inscriptions, while the Mamluk era of the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries shows a revived interest in writing inscriptions. This might of course be only true of Jordan, but there is some evidence to suggest that elsewhere, too, many or most of the inscriptions are from the Umayyad and early Abbasid eras.[34]

PALAEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES IN EARLY INSCRIPTIONS

The Arabic script developed out of a form of Aramaic script. In the course of the twentieth century, it was debated whether the antecedent was the Syriac or Nabataean Aramaic script.[35] This question is now in all probability solved, because of new finds of late Nabataean inscriptions.[36] Since we can follow the development of the Nabataean script until the fifth century CE, and since the letter forms of the earliest Arabic inscriptions (sixth century) are unproblematically derived from the late Nabataean script, there does not seem to be much to support the Syriac origins theory anymore. However, it is of course possible that some features of the Syriac script, such as the use of diacritics, which are all but non-existent in Nabataean script, might have been adopted in the early Arabic script.

A number of studies have dealt with Arabic palaeography, so it can be said that we know early Arabic palaeography rather well.[37] However, although we can call some palaeographical features 'early' (meaning roughly the first three centuries of the Islamic era), none of them are peculiar to the Umayyad period. Furthermore, it must be kept in mind that individual engravers had different hands and that the Arabic script probably did not develop in precisely the same way in the vast region of the Arabic-Islamic world.

Early Arabic (especially, lapidary) script can be described as angular and unornamented. Writing on stone, however, often produces more angularity than writing on other materials would, so angularity is not in itself a foolproof indication of an inscription's antiquity. The angular script is often called Kufic, though the designation is somewhat unfortunate since there is no real connection with Kufa. In the ninth century, the so-called 'floral' (ornamented) Kufic developed out of the earlier script.[38] Non-floral Kufic did continue after the ninth century, so the lack of 'florality' is not sure evidence for early dating, but, on the other hand, the presence of ornamental features suggests a date after AH 200/815–6 CE.

The early script does not usually utilize consonantal diacritics and never utilizes vocalization diacritics (which did not yet exist). The few pre-Islamic Arabic texts written in Arabic script do not contain consonantal diacritics; but since they are only few in number, this is not decisive proof of the nonexistence of diacritics, and so it is not clear when and how they developed. They appear occasionally in our earliest Islamic-era texts, as is shown by their appearance in the AH 24/644–5 CE inscription written by one Zuhayr.[39] However, for reasons that are unclear, they were rarely used. The irregular use of diacritics in the Islamic era results in a certain ambiguity, since many of the letters can be read in various ways.

As mentioned above, the Arabic script developed out of the Nabataean Aramaic script. The latter never marked medial long 'a' vowels (transliterated, *ā*), and this feature was inherited in Arabic script. The three pre-Islamic Arabic texts in Arabic script never indicated medial *ā*s. This begins to change in the Islamic era, when the medial *ā* could be indicated with an *alif* (the first letter of the Arabic alphabet – a single vertical stroke, sometimes in the early script with a tail). However, the usage was not standardized. In the AH 58/677–8 CE inscription mentioning the building of a dam during the time of the caliph Muʿawiya,[40] medial *ā* is given once (in the name Janāb/Ḥubāb); the name Muʿawiya (written in Classical Arabic with a long medial *ā*, *Muʿāwiya*), on the other hand, is written without the *alif*, as *m-ʿ-w-y-h*. Interestingly, the word *banāhu* is written *b-n-y-h*, which shows that the so-called *alif maqṣūra* ('shortened *alif*') was also written with a *yā'* in the medial position. Whether this denotes a modified pronunciation (from 'a' toward 'e', called *imāla*), or some other phonetic phenomenon, or is just an orthographical convention is still debated. Not denoting the medial *ā* was standardized in the later script, occurring only in some words such as *allāh*, *ʾ-l-l-h*, *hādhā*, *h-dh-ʾ*, and so on.

Because of problems with dating inscriptions on purely palaeographical grounds, this chapter discusses texts that are explicitly dated up to AH 132/750 CE. There are two features of the Islamic-era lapidary script that are often used to define texts as 'early' but where caution must still be applied. The two features are the retroflex final *yā'* and the open medial or final *ʿayn* (for the latter, see Figure 20.1).

The retroflex final *yā'* was the more common way of spelling the letter in the early period, although the non-retroflex form coexisted with it (indeed, the two forms of the final *yā'* were already present in the Nabataean script).[41] The retroflex final *yā'* becomes rarer with the passing of time, but the process is slow. The retroflex *yā'* is still found in tenth-century inscriptions,[42] so its occurrence in a text does not vouchsafe an early dating with certainty.

A more useful letter form for dating early texts is the medial or final *ʿayn* with an open top. This feature, common in the seventh and eighth centuries, disappears in the

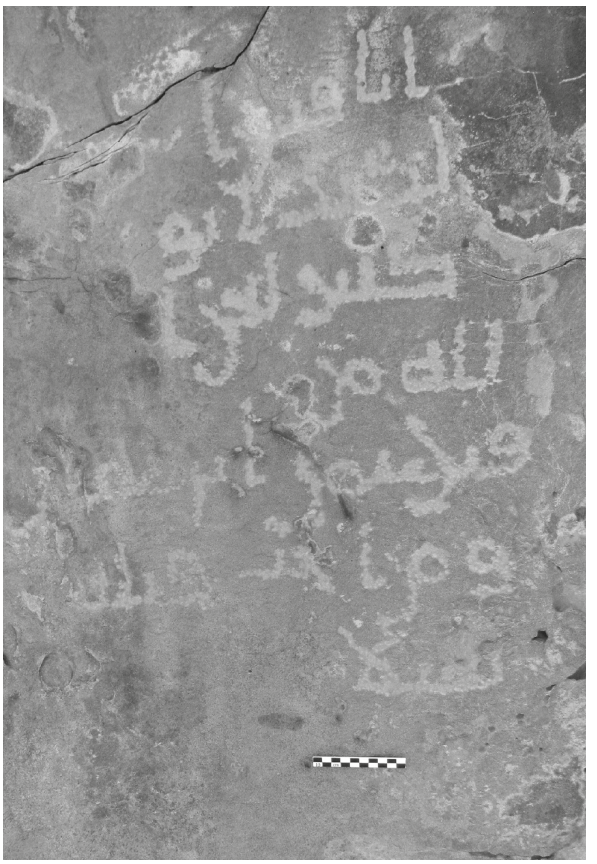

Figure 20.1 An undated but most probably early graffito from near Taymaʾ, Saudi Arabia. Note the open *ʿayn* on line 3, supporting the early (probably pre-AH 200/815–16 CE) dating of the inscription. Photograph by Michael Macdonald, reproduced with permission. First published by Imbert 2015.

ninth century.[43] For this reason, the existence of open medial and final *ʿayn* in a text yields a rough dating of probably before the ninth century. Here again, the non-open form coexisted with the open form, so the lack of the open form does not mean that the text is later.[44] Although palaeography is always somewhat subjective, the open medial or final *ʿayn* is an all but certain feature yielding an 'early' date to an Arabic text. But it is the only foolproof paleographical characteristic for this; and since the letter *ʿayn* does not, of course, feature in medial or final position in every text and since the closed form coexisted with the open one, the usefulness of this feature, too, is limited.

One – orthographical rather than palaeographical – element of the Arabic script remains to be discussed. This is the *hamza*, or glottal stop. As a rule, it is not denoted in the early script. For instance, the word *asʾalu*, 'I ask', is written *ʾ-s-l*;[45] similarly *yasʾalu*, 'he asks', written *y-s-l*.[46] In a couple of rare cases, the *hamza* is indicated with a 'proto-*hamza*' consisting of a couple of dots. This proto-*hamza* occurs in two dated

inscriptions (AH73/ 692–3 CE and AH 92/710–1 CE) as well as some undated ones.[47] Whether the existence or lack of the *hamza* in an inscription is an orthographical or phonetic feature remains unclear. It is unlikely that the *hamza* was pronounced in Hijazi Arabic,[48] so it might be in many cases phonetic: rather than *as'alu*, the writer himself would have pronounced the word **asal(u)*. However, for ease of use, transliterations of the Arabic texts in Latin letters are given according to the rules of Classical Arabic in this chapter.

THE TYPES OF THE INSCRIPTIONS

Umayyad-era inscriptions are divided here into the groups given in the chart below. The main division between 1. *monumental inscriptions* and 2. *graffiti* is made on the basis of the inscriptions' contexts (not, e.g. their function).

1. Monumental inscriptions.
   1a. Building inscriptions.
   1b. Epitaphs.
   1c. Milestone inscriptions.
2. Graffiti.
   2a. Supplications to God, with a wide variety of themes.
   2b. Declarations of faith.
   2c. Graffiti of the type 'I am so-and-so' (*anā fulān bn fulān*), sometimes combined with other graffito forms (e.g. 2a or 2b).
   2d. Qur'anic quotations.
   2e. *Wasiyya*s, graffiti offering advice to readers.
   2f. Literary graffiti, usually quoting lines of poetry.
   2g. Miscellaneous graffiti that do not fit any of the above categories.

With respect to 1. *Monumental* inscriptions, it is interesting to note that there are very few types of Arabic monumental inscriptions in the Umayyad era. One could imagine much more variety. For example Cooley outlines types of Latin inscriptions in the Roman world:

> a variety of other monumental inscriptions [existed] alongside decrees, such as magisterial edicts, laws (*leges*), boundary-markers, honorific dedications on statue bases, building-inscriptions, lists of members of the council (*alba*), and patronal tablets.[49]

Of this list, only building inscriptions are attested in early Arabic inscriptions: there are no administrative or legal inscriptions as such. In addition to building inscriptions, milestone inscriptions and epitaphs form the categories of monumental inscriptions in Umayyad-era Arabic epigraphy. This probably reflects the fact that Arabic literary – and epigraphic – culture was still in its infancy. The *Répertoire chronologique d'épigraphie arabe* (*RCEA*) shows that other types of monumental inscriptions did develop later, such as inscribed, legal, *waqf* ('endowment') texts delineating in which way the *waqf* building or its revenue could be used.[50] Another surviving, rather early, legal inscription from Egypt mentioning

the measuring of a piece of land is dated to AH 209/824–5 CE.[51] Some forms of monumental inscriptions never developed, and this is probably because of Islamic aniconism: the Islamic emphasis on monotheism (*tawhid*) made altars or religious statues with (or without) inscriptions impossible.

Type 2. *Graffiti* are more prevalent than monumental inscriptions. According to Imbert, graffiti form 71 per cent of Arabic inscriptions in his Jordanian corpus (the corpus includes all medieval inscriptions, not only Umayyad-era ones).[52] Similar numerical studies have not been done with other geographical regions, but we can be fairly certain that graffiti form the majority of Arabic inscriptions in all regions in the early Islamic era. The exception to the rule is Egypt, which has yielded, for some reason, a large number of gravestones but not much else.

Graffiti are also typologically much more diverse. A graffito has been defined by Macdonald rather broadly as 'a personal statement inscribed, painted or written in a public space'.[53] I would opt for a similar, general definition of the word graffito: if an inscription is not monumental, it is a graffito. It must be stressed that the use of the word graffito in no way indicates that graffiti are somehow less important as historical sources or less worthy of studying than monumental inscriptions. What is more, graffiti often have intricate and beautiful phraseology.

Naturally, it must be kept in mind that the line between monumental inscriptions and graffiti is flexible. In the case of early Islamic inscriptions, this is especially true as of category 1b. *epitaphs*, which could be in some cases defined as falling under graffito category 2a. *supplications to God*. Furthermore, some inscriptions defined here as graffiti, such as 2d. *Qurʾanic quotations* could have originally had a more monumental context that is now lost. The religious supplications and invocations in graffiti and monumental inscriptions are often rather similar, too, as will be seen below.

Examples from the subcategories in the table further illuminate the different categories of the inscriptions and will explain the division into monumental inscriptions and graffiti. In what follows, one or two examples are given for every inscription-type from the epigraphic record dated to the Umayyad era. It must be remembered that, especially in the case of graffiti, many inscriptions contain formulae and themes from different subcategories.

1a. Building inscriptions

Building inscriptions are found in a variety of contexts. After the necessary opening formulae, they usually include the word *amara*, 'ordered', followed by the caliph, the prince or, in one rare instance,[54] the governor's name. The same phrase appears in the case of 1c. *milestone inscriptions*. Sometimes a different formula is used: *hādhā al-sadd li-ʿabdallāh muʿāwiya amīr al-muʾminīn*, 'This dam belongs to the servant of God Muʿawiya, Commander of the Believers'.[55] There are building inscriptions that commemorate the building of a dam (the previous example), a water reservoir,[56] different types of building complexes (*al-madīna*, *al-ʿamal*, *al-bunyān*, *al-buyūt*),[57] a minaret,[58] and the inauguration of a road (*tashīl hādhihi al-ʿaqaba*, 'levelling of this mountain road').[59]

The following example, a building inscription in three parts commemorating the building of a water reservoir, exhibits the formulae found in many building inscriptions. The date of the inscription is AH104/722–3 CE; it was found at al-Muwaqqar, Jordan:

allāhumma ṣallī[60] *ʿalā muḥammad ʿabdika rasūl allāh*

O God, bless Muḥammad, Your servant, the Messenger of God.

bi-sm allāh al-raḥmān al-raḥīm amara bi-bunyān hādhihi al-birka ʿabdallāh yaz[īd] amīr al-muʾminīn aṣlaḥahu allāh wa-ḥafiẓahu wa-madda lahu fī al-ʿumr wa-l-yusr wa-atamma ʿalayhi niʿmatahu wa-karāmatahu fī al-dunyā wa-l-ākhira buniyat ʿalā yaday ʿabdallāh bn sulaym

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful; the servant of God Yazīd [II], Commander of the Believers, ordered the building of this water reservoir, may God keep him pious and preserve him and prolong his life and ease and make His favor and bounty upon him full in this world and the next; and it was built under the supervision of ʿAbdallāh ibn Sulaym.

sanat arbaʿ [wa-mi]ʾa

In the year one hundred and four [AH /722–3 CE].[61]

Notable aspects in the building inscriptions are 1) some sort of opening formulae, perhaps mentioning the Prophet Muhammad and the *basmala*; 2) the mention of the type of building (here, *birka*, 'water reservoir'); 3) the name of the caliph (called *ʿabdallāh* and *amīr al-muʾminīn*, 'the servant of God' and 'Commander of the Believers'), or sometimes, the prince (called *ibn amīr al-muʾminīn*); 4) blessing formulae for the caliph or other sponsor of the building; 5) the mention of the person who carried out the actual building project, always with the phrase *ʿalā yaday*, meaning 'under the supervision of', or, simply, 'by'.

Cooley remarks that in some cases of Latin epigraphy, 'the emperor's name apparently occurs for purely honorific reasons, without his having been involved in the building-work at all'.[62] This might hold true for Arabic epigraphy too: even though it is always stated that the caliph, or his son, 'ordered' (*amara*) the building project, it might be the case in some instances that the one who really ordered and administrated the construction was the governor or another figure, who is usually mentioned at the end of the building inscription.

1b.Epitaphs

Epitaphs often explicitly mention that the stone in question marks a grave (*qabr*). The following inscription is from Aswan in Egypt and is dated to AH 102/721 CE:

bi-sm allāh al-raḥmān al-raḥīm tabāraka alladhī bi-yadihi al-mulk wa-huwa ʿalā kull shayʿ qadīr hādhā qabr fāṭima ibnat al-ḥasan bn … raḥmat allāh wa-maghfiratuhu wa-riḍwānuhu ʿalayhi [sic] *tuwuffiya* [sic] *yawm al-ithnayn awwal yawm min shaʿbān min sanat ithnayn wa-miʾa*

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful; blessed be He in whose hand is dominion, and He is over all things powerful [Q. 67:1]; this is the grave of Fāṭima bint al-Ḥasan bn …, may God's mercy and forgiveness and acceptance

> be upon him [sic]; he [sic] died on Monday, the first day of Shaʿbān in the year one hundred and two [AH/February 4, 721 CE].[63]

The following gravestone inscription, also from Aswan in Egypt, is usually dated to the first century, but is more likely second or third century:

> *bi-sm allāh al-raḥmān al-raḥīm inna aʿẓam maṣāʾib ahl al-islām muṣībatuhum bi-l-nabī muḥammad ṣallā allāh ʿalayhi wa-sallama hādhā qabr ʿabbāsa ibnat jurayj (?) bn …* [64] *raḥmat allāh wa-maghfiratuhu wa-riḍwānuhu ʿalayhā tuwuffiyat yawm al-ithnayn li-arbaʿ ʿashr khalawna min dhī al-qaʿda sanat iḥdā wa-sabʿīn wa-hiya tashhadu allā ilāh illā allāh waḥdahu lā sharīk lahu wa-anna muḥammadan ʿabduhu wa-rasūluhu ṣallā allāh ʿalayhi wa-sallama*
>
> In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate; the greatest calamity of the people of Islam is their losing of the Prophet Muḥammad, may God bless him and grant him peace; this is the grave of ʿAbbasa bint Jurayj (?) ibn …, may God's mercy and forgiveness and acceptance be upon her; she died on Monday, Dhu al-Qaʿda 14, in the year 71 [? AH/April 19, 691 CE], witnessing that there is no god than God alone, He has no partners, and that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger, may God bless him and grant him peace.[65]

Hoyland noted that the date might in fact refer to AH 171/788 CE, with the century omitted, because of the elaborate script and phraseology.[66] Indeed, one finds the phrase *inna aʿẓam maṣāʾib la-muṣībat al-nabī muḥammad* in various epitaphs from the second and third centuries AH,[67] but not before. The date of ʿAbbasa's gravestone is, thus, most likely AH 171/788 CE or even AH 271/885 CE. ʿAbbasa's epitaph also mentions *ahl al-islām*, 'the people of Islam', as a community, which also points to a second- or third-century AH date.

The other type of funerary inscriptions is that where reference is made to someone having died (*tuwuffiya*), and forgiveness and blessings are asked for her, but the grave (*qabr*) itself is not mentioned. In some cases, it is not clear whether a grave was located nearby. An example of such an inscription is the following, found in Southeastern Jordan and dating to AH 110/728–9 CE:

> *rabbī allāh taraḥḥama/yarḥamu ʿadī bn ṣadr* (?) *[bn] ʿabd al-malik bn jaʿfar tuwuffiya al-aḥad sanat ʿashr wa-miʾa*
>
> May my Lord, God, have mercy on ʿAdi ibn Sadr (?) ibn ʿAbd al-Malik ibn Jaʿfar, who died on Sunday in the year one hundred and ten [AH/728–9 CE].[68]

In this inscription, it is notable that the day of the week (Sunday) is mentioned but not the month or the exact date. This might point to the inscription's not being on an actual gravestone, while being commemorative in nature. Some of the *tuwuffiya* inscriptions could actually fit better graffito category 2a. *supplications to God*, if it can be shown that the archaeological context points toward the interpretation that the inscription is not near a grave.

1c. Milestone inscriptions

There are seven extant milestones from the Umayyad period, some of which, unfortunately, are damaged.[69] All are from the reign of ʿAbd al-Malik (AH 65–86/685–705 CE), which probably reflects their patronage and production. One well preserved example is from Fiq, Golan, and is dated to AH 85/704 CE:

> *bi-sm allāh al-raḥmān al-raḥ[īm] lā ilāh illā allāh waḥdahu lā sharīk lahu muḥa[mmad rasūl] allāh amara bi-ṣanʿat hādhihi al-amyāl ʿabdallāh [ʿabd a]l-malik amīr al-muʾminīn ʿalā yaday musāwir mawlā amī[r al-muʾminīn] fī shaʿbān min sanat khams wa-thamānīn min dimashq ilā hādhā thalātha [wa-khamsīn mīlan]*
>
> In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful; there is no god but God; He has no partners; Muhammad is the messenger of God; the servant of God ʿAbd al-Malik, Commander of the Believers, ordered the building of these milestones under the supervision of Musawir, the *mawla* of the Commander of the Believers, in Shaʿban in the year eighty-five [AH/August–September 704 CE]; from Damascus to this [milestone] fifty-three miles.[70]

The formulae in the other milestones are all very similar: 1) the *basmala* and other opening formulae proclaiming the oneness of God and the prophecy of Muhammad; 2) the mention of the caliph; 3) the mention of the supervisor or the actual constructor, with a possible date; 4) the distance from Damascus, the caliphate's capital, to the milestone in question. In all the preserved milestones the distance is measured from Damascus, but this might be because they all stem from Syria-Palestine; if they existed, Umayyad-era Iraqi or Arabian milestones could perhaps have referred to other cities such as Basra and Medina.

After this typology of monumental inscriptions, we can turn to the graffiti, which, as stated above, form the majority of the corpus of the Umayyad-era inscriptions.

2a. Supplications to God

The most voluminous subcategory under graffiti is 2a. *supplications to God*. The supplications are often written in the third person singular and in the suffix conjugation (the so-called perfect tense). The writing in the third person singular is a convention that does *not*, in the most cases, indicate that the person mentioned and the engraver were different.[71] There are many cases where it is explicitly stated that the writer of the graffito and the person for whom forgiveness is asked are one and the same. This is done by first asking forgiveness or blessing to so-and-so and then noting *kataba* so-and-so at the end.[72] As to the suffix conjugation/perfect tense, the form has multiple functions in Arabic, not only denoting something that happened in the past ('he wrote/he has written'). Especially in the inscriptions, the meaning is often optative (*ʿafā allāh ʿan*, 'may God forgive', *samiʿa allāh wa-ajāba*, 'may God hear and answer') or performative (*āmantu bi-llāh*, 'I [state that I] believe in God').

The themes and formulae in 2a. are varied, so it is hard to give representative examples. The earliest example of a supplication to God is from AH 29/650 CE, Wadi Khushayba, Saudi Arabia:

> *taraḥḥama allāh ʿalā yazīd bn ʿabdallāh al-salūlī wa-kutiba/kataba fī jumādā min sanat tisʿ wa-ʿishrīn*
>
> May God have mercy on Yazid ibn ʿAbdallah al-Saluli and it was written/he wrote in Jumada [I or II?] of the year twenty-nine [AH/January–March 650 CE].[73]

A second, later, example, dating to AH 91/710 CE, and from al-Awjariyya, Saudi Arabia, on the pilgrimage route to Mecca, contains the commonest formula in early Islamic graffiti: *allāhumma ighfir li-fulān*, 'O God, forgive so-and-so':

> *allāhumma ighfir li-makhlad/mukhallad bn abī makhlad/mukhallad mawlā ʿalī wa-taqabbul minhu ḥijjatuhu āmīn rabb al-ʿālamīn wa-kutiba/kataba fī dhī al-qaʿda min sanat iḥdā wa-tisʿīn raḥima allāh man qaraʾa hādhā al-kitāb thumma qāla āmīn*
>
> O God, forgive Makhlad/Mukhallad ibn Abi Makhlad/Mukhallad, the *mawla* of ʿAli, and accept his pilgrimage, amen, Lord of the world; and it was written/he wrote in Dhu al-Qaʿda in the year ninety-one [AH/September–October 710 CE]; may God have mercy on who recites this inscription and then says 'amen'.[74]

But *allāhumma ighfir li-fulān*, 'O God, forgive so-and-so', is only one among many formulae with which blessings and benefactions are asked from God in the graffiti. Other formulae include, for example the following (only one reference to an inscription where this occurs is given):

- *tāba allāh ʿalā fulān*, 'may God accept the repentance of so-and-so' (AH 121/738–9 CE graffito).[75]
- *ʿafā allāh ʿan fulān*, 'may God pardon so-and-so' (AH 80/699–700 AH graffito).[76]
- *ʿāfā allāh fulān*, 'may God pardon so-and-so' (AH 123/740–1 CE graffito).[77]
- *raḥima/taraḥḥama allāh fulān*, 'may God have mercy on so-and-so' (AH 29/649–50 CE graffito, above; AH 78/697–8 CE graffito);[78] it might be noted that in the early Islamic era this formula does not mean necessarily that the person mentioned in the inscription is dead.
- *raḥmat allāh wa-barakātuhu ʿalā fulān*, 'God's mercy and blessings be upon so-and-so' (AH 40/660–1 CE graffito).[79]
- *ṣallā allāh ʿalā fulān*, 'may God bless so-and-so' (AH 123/740–1 CE graffito);[80] this phrase is not only used in connection with the Prophet.
- *adkhilhu al-janna*, 'let him enter Paradise' (AH 85/704–5 CE graffito).[81]
- *wa-ḥfaẓhu fī ahlihi*, 'and preserve him in his family' (AH 109/727–8 CE graffito).[82]
- *allāhumma aṣliḥ fulān*, 'O God, keep so-and-so pious' (AH 113/731–2 CE graffito).[83]

- *raḍiya allāh ʿan fulān*, 'May God be pleased with so-and-so' (AH 98/716–7 CE graffito).[84]

In addition to these positive formulae, there are a small number of curses directed at people who might erase (*maḥā*) the inscription.[85]

Another important formula appearing in inscriptions in category 2a is that where the writer asks (*yasʾalu*) God for something. The thing asked for is usually Paradise or is in some way connected with it, for example: *yasʾalu allāh al-janna nuzulan wa-l-malāʾika rusulan*, 'he asks God for Paradise as lodgings and angels as messengers' (AH 80/699–700 CE).[86] Concepts related to the Holy War also feature: *asʾaluhu al-shahāda fī sabīlihi*, 'I ask Him for martyrdom on His path' (AH 78/697–8 CE);[87] *yasʾalu allāh jihādan fī sabīlihi*, 'he asks God for jihad on His path' (AH 110/728–9 CE).[88] Indeed, the theme of jihad and martyrdom are very important in early Islamic inscriptions. In one inscription, the writer asks: *allāhumma ijʿal ʿamalī jihādan wājiban wa-aqnī/wāfinī* [? reading uncertain] *istishhād* [sic] *fī sabīlika*, 'O God, make my deeds obligatory jihad and grant martyrdom in Your path' (AH 117/735–6 CE).[89] In undated, but supposedly early inscriptions, writers also ask for *al-qatl* (to be killed) and *al-mawt* (death) while fighting the jihad.[90]

2b. Declarations of faith

The formulae of the inscriptions in 2b. *declarations of faith* are formed with, for example the Arabic roots *sh-h-d*, 'to testify (that there is no god but God)', *ʾ-m-n*, 'to believe (in God)', *w-k-l*, 'to rely (on God)', ʿ-ṣ-m, 'to take refuge (in God)', *ʿ-w-dh*, 'to seek shelter (in God)', *w-th-q*, 'to trust (in God)'. The following is an example of such a declaration from ʿAsir, Saudi Arabia, and dated to AH 127/744 CE:

> *shahida ʿabd al-malik ibn ʿabd al-raḥmān anna allāh ḥaqq lā ilāh illā huwa al-ḥayy al-qayyūm wa-kutiba/kataba fī al-muḥarram sanat sabʿ wa-ʿishrīn wa-miʾa laʿana allāh man maḥā hādhā al-kitāb aw ghayyarahu āmīn*
>
> ʿAbd al-Malik ibn ʿAbd al-Rahman testifies that God is truth, there is no god than He, the Living, the Self-subsisting; and it was written/he wrote in al-Muḥarram in the year one hundred and twenty-seven [AH/October–November 744 CE]; may God curse whoever erases this inscription or changes it, amen.[91]

The social function of the inscriptions is clear in the following, which addresses not only God but also possible readers of the inscription from near Taʾif, Saudi Arabia and is dated to AH 78/697–8 CE:

> *shahida al-rayyān bn ʿabdallāh annahu lā ilāh illā allāh wa-shahida anna muḥammadan rasūl allāh thumma huwa yakfī man abā an yashhada ʿalā dhālika raḥima allāh al-rayyān wa-ghafara lahu wa-astahdīhi ilā ṣirāṭ al-janna wa-asʾaluhu al-shahāda fī sabīlihi āmīn kutiba hādhā al-kitāb ʿām buniya al-masjid al-ḥarām li-sanat thamān wa-sabʿīn*

> Al-Rayyan ibn ʿAbdallah testifies that there is no god but God and he testifies that Muhammad is the Messenger of God; He is sufficient against those who refuse to testify that; may God have mercy on al-Rayyan and forgive him; and I [sic] seek guidance from Him to the road of Paradise; and I ask Him for martyrdom on His path, amen; and this inscription was written in the year the Masjid al-Haram was (re)built, year seventy-eight [AH/697–8 CE].[92]

This graffito is significant because it mentions the rebuilding of the Masjid al-Haram. This probably refers to the commander al-Hajjaj's building work at Mecca after the Umayyad victory in the second *fitna*, or civil war (683–92).[93] The inscription is also a rather early example of the Islamic testimony of faith (including also a reference to the Prophet). A further interesting feature is the abrupt change from the third person to the first person singular toward the end. Notwithstanding this, I would interpret the whole inscription as being written by al-Rayyan b. ʿAbdallah; or, perhaps less likely, an anonymous writer wrote the inscription for al-Rayyan.

2c. Graffiti of the type anā fulān

Next, we will deal with a graffito form which is among the earliest types of Islamic graffiti (indeed, some of these inscriptions could be even pre-Islamic, but there is currently nothing to support this). This is 2c. *graffiti of the type* anā fulān, 'I am so-and-so'. There are a plethora of early such inscriptions simply noting a name; the exact dating of these inscriptions is often impossible. However, we also have dated inscriptions of the type *anā fulān*. Among them is our second-earliest dated Islamic-era inscription, a graffito from Qaʿ al-Muʿtadil, Saudi Arabia, dated to AH 24/ 644–5 CE:

> *bi-sm allāh anā zuhayr katabtu zaman tuwuffiya ʿumar sanat arbaʿ wa-ʿishrīn*
>
> In the name of God; I, Zuhayr, wrote [this] at the time when ʿUmar died, in the year twenty-four [AH/ 644–5 CE].[94]

The graffiti having the formula *anā fulān* seem to belong especially to the first century of Islam, becoming rare by the middle of the eighth century.[95] Even though most of the early Arabic inscriptions are religious and pious in tone, the *anā* graffiti represent a more mundane type of epigraphic activity. The graffiti in this category sometimes contain commentary on historical events: the AH 24/644–5 CE graffito quoted above probably refers to the death of ʿUmar, the second caliph. The following *anā fulān* inscription, for its part, comments on the killing of the third caliph, ʿUthman:

> *anā qays al-kātib abū kathīr laʿana allāh man qatala ʿuthmān ibn ʿaffān wa-man aḥaththa qatlahu taqtīlan*
>
> I am Qays Abu Kathir [or Kuthayr/Kuthayyir/Kabir/Kaniz/Kunayz] the scribe; may God curse those who killed ʿUthman ibn ʿAffan and those who incited his killing mercilessly.
>
> (see Figure 20.1)

Unfortunately, the inscription does not contain a date, but it is palaeographically early (open medial *ʿayn* in *laʿana*, line 3). It is a rare example of an inscription that engages strongly with historical commentary or takes a clear factional, pro-Umayyad, stance.[96]

2d. Qurʾanic quotations

The earliest dated inscription to contain Qurʾanic quotations is not a graffiti but the monumental mosaic inscription of the Dome of the Rock (AH 72/691–2 CE).[97] The earliest appearance of Qurʾanic passages in graffiti, on the other hand, is AH 80/699–700 CE. They occur in three graffiti from near Mecca written by a certain ʿUthman b. Wahran.[98] ʿUthman b. Wahran's inscriptions quote the following Qurʾanic passages, with minor differences from the Cairo edition: 38:26, 56:28–40, and 4:87.

Qurʾanic quotations occurring in the graffiti show that the engravers approached the text with some freedom.[99] For example the following graffito near Mecca, dated to AH 84/703–4 CE, includes a mixture of Qurʾanic passages:

> *yā ayyuhā al-nās ittaqū rabbakum alladhī khalaqakum wa-lladhīna min qablikum laʿallakum tufliḥūna wa-kataba ʿabdallāh bn ʿumāra li-sanat arbaʿ wa-thamānīn*
>
> O people, fear your Lord, who created you and those before you, so that you may prosper; ʿAbdallah ibn ʿUmara wrote [this] in the year eighty-four [AH/703–4 CE].[100]

The relevant Qurʾanic passages are perhaps 4:1, 2:21, and 2:189. ʿAbdallah b. ʿUmara may have misremembered the Qurʾanic text, or perhaps he just approached the text freely, reworking it in a way he saw fit.

2e. *Waṣiyyas*, graffiti offering advice to the readers

*Waṣiyya*s form a distinct and interesting category. In these texts, the writer urges (using the verb *awṣā*) the readers to adopt something, usually devoutness (*birr*) or piety (*taqwā*). The verb *awṣā* can, of course, also mean 'to bequeath; to decree by will', but in these inscriptions nothing appears that would make one think that the engraver (or, perhaps, the commissioner) of the inscription was dying. Hence, the meaning of *awṣā bi-* in these inscriptions is 'to urge'. The formula appears twice in the inscriptions dated to the Umayyad era. The first is at Hisma, Saudi Arabia and dated to AH 43/663–4 CE:

> *anā shurayḥ/surayj mawlā banī ʿadī bn kaʿb ūṣī bi-birr allāh wa-l-raḥim kutiba hādhā min sanat thalāth wa-arbaʿīn*
>
> I, Shurayh/Surayj, the *mawla* of Banu ʿAdi ibn Kaʿb, urge devoutness towards God and relatives; this was written in the year forty-three [AH/663–4 CE].[101]

The second is near Medina, Saudi Arabia and is dated to AH 96/714–5 CE:

allāhumma ʿāfī ribāḥ bn ḥafṣ bn ʿāṣim bn ʿumar bn al-khaṭṭāb awṣā bi-birr[102] *allāh wa-l-raḥim wa-kutiba/kataba fī sanat sitt [wa-]tisʿīn*

O God, pardon Ribah ibn Hafs ibn ʿAsim ibn ʿUmar ibn al-Khattab; he urged devoutness towards God and relatives; and it was written/he wrote in the year ninety-six [AH/714–5 CE].[103]

Note that the person mentioned in the previous inscription seems to be the great-grandson of the second caliph ʿUmar b. al-Khattab. These *waṣiyya* inscriptions show that early Islamic epigraphy had a distinct social meaning and the engravers intended that their texts would be read by others.

2f. Literary graffiti

There are a few early Arabic inscriptions that are literary in character. Usually they quote lines of poetry. The only such Umayyad-era dated inscription is the following poetic graffito from near Mecca, dated to AH 98/716–7 CE. The meter is *kamil* (the slashes in the transliteration indicate the end of a hemistich of the poem; the case endings are given):

afnā l-jadīda taqallubu l-shamsi / wa-ṭulūʿuhā min ḥaythu lā tumsī // wa-ṭulūʿuhā bayḍāʾa ṣāfiyatan / wa-ghurūbuhā ṣafrāʾa ka-l-warsi // wa-kataba abū jaʿfar bn ḥasan al-hāshimī sanat thamān wa-tisʿīn

New things are made to perish by the turning of the sun and its rising from where it is not in the evening; it rises bright and clear, and sets, pale like the [color of the] *wars* plant; Abū Jaʿfar ibn Ḥasan al-Hāshimī wrote [this] in the year ninety-eight [AH/716–7 CE].[104]

In addition to this very interesting inscription, we have some undated but probably early inscriptions that have literary but also sometimes religious characteristics.[105]

2g. Miscellaneous graffiti

There is a small number of graffiti that do not fit any of the categories 2a–2f. For example a graffito dated to AH 122/740 CE, from Hammat Gader, Israel, seems rather unusual. Its beginning is missing, which might of course affect its interpretation. It seems to be a completely mundane description of some group's activities:

tanazzalnā fī hādhihi al-ḥammām yawm al-khamīs mustahall rabīʿ al-awwal sanat ithnay wa-ʿishrīn wa-miʾa

we stayed in this bath house on Thursday, the beginning of Rabiʿ I, in the year one hundred and twenty-two [AH/February 4, 740 CE].[106]

There is also a (once again damaged) AH 99/717–8 CE graffito from Kos, Greece, which mentions a raid (*ghazwa*) but contains no usual formulae, at least in the preserved parts:

> *ʿaṭāʿ bn saʿd al… mushrikīn fī ghazwa … sanat tisʿ wa-tisʿīn naṣr allāh wa-l-fatḥ al-ʿaẓīm…*
>
> ʿAtaʿ ibn Saʿd al-… [fought against?] polytheists on a raid … in the year ninety-nine [AH/717–8 CE]; the help of God and great victory [cf. Q. 110: 1].[107]

The inscriptions labelled here 'miscellaneous' are few in number. More finds will hopefully help categorize these epigraphic texts and understand their context.

WHY WERE INSCRIPTIONS WRITTEN?

It is interesting to speculate about the motivation for the Arabic epigraphic habit, which was rather widespread in the early Islamic centuries. I will start with the graffiti and discuss the monumental inscriptions later.

In discussing (pre-Islamic) Ancient North Arabian graffiti, Macdonald has suggested that many of them were written as a pastime, to while away the time when the flock was grazing, for instance.[108] This might be true for some Islamic-era Arabic inscriptions as well, particularly those of the *anā fulān* type. However, other graffiti (e.g. categories 2a., 2b., and 2d.) were probably written for altogether different reasons. It is suggested here that the writing of these graffiti itself was a form of religious worship and an expression of personal piety, but with an intended social function as well. In the graffiti, the engravers ask for their sins to be forgiven (2a.) or declare their belief in the one God (2b.). The act of engraving a graffito took place between the writer and God. But the graffiti were also intended for others to read, indeed, to be read aloud (*qaraʾa*). In this way, the engraver ensured that his supplication to God lived on long after the writing of the graffito itself. The later reciters of the inscription are mentioned in many early graffiti, for example the following, from Wadi Salma, Jordan and dated to AH 105/723 CE:

> *allāhumma ghāfir al-dhanb wa-qābil al-tawba shadīd al-ʿiqāb dhū al-ṭawl lā ilāh illā anta ighfir li-thawāba bn ʿuthmān al-ṣarmī dhanbahu mā taqaddama minhu wa-mā taʾakhkhara wa-ijʿal al-janna maʾābahu wa-l-muʾminīn aṣḥābahu innaka anta al-samīʿ al-ʿalīm ghafara allāh li-man qaraʾa hādhā al-kitāb thumma qāla āmīn rabb al-ʿālamīn wa-kutiba/kataba yawm al-jumʿa fī jumādā al-ākhar sanat khamsa wa-miʾa*
>
> O God, the One forgiving sin and accepting repentance, severe in punishment, powerful, there is no God but You; forgive Thawaba ibn ʿUthman al-Sarmi his earlier and later sins; and make paradise his place of return and Believers his friends; You are Hearing, All-Knowing; may God forgive who recites this inscription and then says 'amen, Lord of the world'; it was written/he wrote on Friday, Jumada II, in the year one hundred and five [AH/November–December 723 CE].[109]

Writing inscriptions also had a social aspect. Graffiti invited other graffiti, as can be seen on the stone slabs and rock walls that are full of inscriptions written by different people. It is a pity that the writers of early graffiti never, as far as I know, mention the other graffiti nearby, although they must have read them. However, a much later, fourteenth-century inscription shows that the old inscriptions were indeed read and reacted to. This inscription was found next to an early, Kufic inscription:

> *qaraʾa hādhā al-makhṭūṭ al-kūfī hārūn ibn jamāʿa raḥima allāh man ʿalimahu wa-ʿalimahu ibnuhu wa-jamīʿ al-muslimīn ʿāmmatan wa-kutiba/kataba sanat khams wa-thalāthīn wa-sabʿ miʾa*
>
> Harun ibn Jamaʿa recited this Kufic inscription; may God have mercy on who learned it – and his son learned it – and [may God have mercy on] all Muslims, every one of them; and it was written/he wrote in the year seven hundred and thirty-five [AH/1334–5 CE].[110]

Monumental inscriptions of course also had a social role: they were engraved to commemorate the building of something or a deceased person (in the case of epitaphs). Commemoration 'lies at the heart of epigraphic culture', as Cooley has noted.[111] The Umayyad caliphs wanted to portray themselves as avid sponsors of building projects. While it is, of course, somewhat due to the whims of time what has survived and what not, the following caliphs are mentioned in the building inscriptions:

- Muʿawiya (r. AH 40–60/661–80 CE): two dams.[112]
- ʿAbd al-Malik (r. AH 65–86/685–705 CE): the Dome of the Rock[113] and seven milestones (for references, see section 1c. Milestone inscriptions, above).
- Al-Walid I, when he was not yet the caliph but the heir apparent: Qasr Burquʿ, built in AH 81/700–1 CE.[114]
- Yazid II (r. AH 101–5/720–4 CE): a water reservoir at al-Muwaqqar.[115]
- Hisham (r. AH 105–25/724–43 CE): three building complexes, Qasr al-Hayr al-Gharbi,[116] Qasr al-Hayr al-Sharqi,[117] and Baysan,[118] as well as a water reservoir at al-Suwaydaʾ.[119]
- Al-Walid II, when he was not yet the caliph but the heir apparent (i.e. before AH 125/743 CE): Qusayr ʿAmra.[120]

It can be seen that the great builders of the Umayyad era were Muʿawiya, ʿAbd al-Malik, and Hisham, just as one might expect on the basis of Arabic chronicles and other literary sources. Most of the surviving monumental inscriptions are from secular buildings, perhaps because religious sites were rebuilt in later times, but perhaps also reflecting patterns of monumental epigraphy. Likewise, that all dam inscriptions are from the reign of Muʿawiya and all milestones are from the reign of ʿAbd al-Malik may be an accident of survival, but it seems possible that it reflects the activities of specific caliphs.

CONCLUSIONS

Some themes are conspicuous by their absence from the inscriptions. To begin with, even if the inscriptions are written in Arabic, none of them displays any characteristics

of Arab ethnic identity. Of course, many of the inscriptions mention Arab(ian) tribes, but there are no cases in which a writer identifies himself as an Arab (*al-ʿarabī*, *min al-ʿarab*, or something similar). The only clear group identity that the inscriptions, whether monumental or graffiti, put forward, in addition to references to tribal groups, is religious: *al-muʾminūn* (appearing first in AH 58/677–8 CE)[121] and, later, *al-muslimūn* (AH 107/725–6 CE).[122] The antithesis of the Believers are *al-mushrikūn*, polytheists, appearing in one dated graffito of AH 99/717–8 CE.[123] Interestingly, intra-Islamic factions are almost non-existent. I am only aware of one early factional inscription. This is the inscription quoted earlier (Figure 20.1), which is pro-ʿUthman or pro-Umayyad in character.

While Arabs are not mentioned, neither are other peoples: Persians, Romans, and other ethnic designations are completely lacking. Furthermore, Jews, Christians, Zoroastrians, and so on, do not appear as such (except, perhaps, as *al-mushrikūn*). Finally, women are all but absent in early Islamic epigraphy. In the dated inscriptions until AH 132/750 CE, only four women are mentioned: Bint Shayba, the patron of Zuhayr, appearing in the graffito of AH 24/644–5 CE;[124] in addition to this, there are two epitaphs: those of Fatima bint al-Hasan (of AH 102/721 CE)[125] and Mala (?) bint ʿIbad (of AH 131/748–9 CE).[126] None of the inscriptions seem to have been written by women.

Umayyad-era inscriptions are an invaluable set of evidence especially since many of them come from Greater Syria, which was later all but forgotten in historical memory.[127] In their monumental inscriptions, the Umayyad caliphs and their governors, often reviled in Arabic historiography, come to life. Moreover, the graffiti give a unique angle on early Islamic piety. They show an intense interest in proclaiming God's monotheism and (from the AH 70s/689–99 CE onwards) Muhammad's prophecy. With the graffiti, we can trace a development from simple and rather mundane *anā fulān* graffiti through indeterminate, but strict, monotheism, finally to specifically Islamic religiousness. This seems to fit rather well with the 'Believers theory' advocated by Donner.[128] The writers of the graffiti were preoccupied with sin, repentance, forgiveness, and the afterlife. For many, the surest way to Paradise was martyrdom in jihad, so they ask to be killed while fighting on His path. Although recent scholarship has suggested that the earliest Believers and their military expansion were influenced by the apocalyptic idea that the end of time had begun,[129] there is no evidence for this in the epigraphic evidence (nor, as far as I am aware, other types of documentary evidence). This does not necessarily mean that the earliest Believers did not hold such an apocalyptic outlook. In epigraphy, however, death and the afterlife are completely private enterprises and are not connected with any broader eschatological drama.

NOTES

1 I am very grateful to Prof. Jaakko Hämeen-Anttila for important comments on an earlier draft of this article.

2 I collect and reanalyze all the dated inscriptions until AH 132/750 CE in Lindstedt 2019.

3 Blair 1998: 97–204.

4 For studies on early Arabic epigraphy, see, for example Ghabban 2008; Grohmann 1962; Hoyland 1997b and 2006; Imbert 2000, 2011, 2012, and 2013; al-Moraekhi 2002; Ory 1990; Rāġib 2011.

5 Islamic Awareness. www.islamic-awareness.org/History/Islam/Inscriptions/. Last accessed 19 July 2018.
6 Fondation Max van Berchen 2020.
7 Kalus 2009.
8 Grohmann 1967–71: II, 93–141.
9 For these, see Hoyland 1997a.
10 See Harjumäki and Lindstedt 2016.
11 For a longer survey and exact references to the publications, see Macdonald 2008 and 2015a.
12 However, the identification of the language of the inscription as Arabic is disputed by Al-Jallad 2014.
13 Al-Jallad and al-Manaser 2015.
14 Nehmé 2010.
15 See also Gruendler 1993.
16 Nehmé 2010.
17 Macdonald 2008: 468, 470.
18 Al-Jallad 2015: 10–14.
19 Macdonald 2008: 466.
20 Al-Jallad 2015: 12.
21 I would like to thank Michael Macdonald for sending me the photograph of the inscription; see also Hoyland 2010: 40–1.
22 Al-Ṣanduq 1955.
23 For example El-Hawary 1930 and 1932; Wiet 1941; ʿAbd al-Tawab 1977.
24 Al-Ṣanduq 1955.
25 For example Nevo, Cohen and Heftman 1993 (the inscriptions are republished in Nevo and Koren, 2003); Sharon 1997– will supposedly include all the pre-modern Arabic inscriptions from the area; Khamis 2001.
26 For example Musil 1908; Imbert 1995 and 1998; al-Jbour 2001; Karim 2001, 2002, and 2003; Salamen 2010; Lindstedt 2014; Bqāʿīn, Corbett and Khamis 2015.
27 Ory 1967.
28 Imbert 2013.
29 For example Miles 1948; Grohmann 1962; Sharafaddin 1977; Donner 1984; al-Muaikel 1988; al-Rashid 1993, 1995, 2000, 2008, and 2009; al-Thenayian 2004 and 2015; Kawatoko, Tokunaga and Iizuka 2005; al-Harithi 2007; Ghabban 2008; al-Kilabi 2009; al-Saʿid et al. 2017.
30 Clermont-Ganneau 1900; Sauvaget 1941; Littmann 1949; al-ʿUshsh 1964.
31 Al-Thenayian 1993.
32 For example the AH 24/644–5 CE inscription: Ghabban 2008.
33 Imbert 1998: 46.
34 See, for example a list of the 300 inscriptions in the collection in al-Kilabi 2009: 581–608; most of them are dated by her to the seventh–ninth centuries CE.
35 For an outline of the arguments of the debate and for an argument for the Nabataean origins, see Gruendler 1993.
36 Nehmé 2010.
37 See, for example Abbott 1939; Grohmann 1967–71; Gruendler 1993; Robin 2006.
38 Grohmann 1967–71: II, 93–141.
39 Ghabban 2008.
40 Miles 1948.
41 See Gruendler 1993: 112–15.
42 Grohmann 1967–71: II, 221.

43 For example in Grohmann 1967–71, the last occurrence of the open form is in AH 209/824–5 CE (II, 129).
44 See Gruendler 1993: 79, in which closed medial and final *ʿayn*s appear in a papyrus dated to AH 54/673–4 CE.
45 For example AH 80/699–700 CE graffito in al-Kilabi 2009: 65–6.
46 In a graffito of the same year, al-Thenayian 2015: 71–2.
47 Imbert 2012: 124–5.
48 *EI2*, 'Hamza' (H. Fleisch).
49 Cooley 2012: 12.
50 For inscriptions from Ayyubid Syria, see Littmann 1949.
51 *RCEA*: I, 129.
52 Imbert 1998: 47.
53 Macdonald 2015b: 28.
54 Sauvaget 1941: 56–7.
55 Miles 1948; al-Harithi 1997: 79.
56 Rihaoui 1961–62.
57 *RCEA*: I, no. 27; Clermont-Ganneau 1900; Khamis 2001; Grohmann 1967–71: II, 84.
58 Sauvaget 1941: 54.
59 Sharon 1966.
60 This imperative verb that is in Classical Arabic pronounced *ṣalli* is in most cases written *ṣ-l-y* in the epigraphic record.
61 Hamilton 1946; Mayer 1946.
62 Cooley 2012: 45.
63 ʿAbd al-Tawab 1977: 2.
64 The readings of ʿAbbasa's father's and grandfather's names are not certain. The published photograph is not clear enough to suggest anything certain.
65 El-Hawary 1932; Bacharach and Anwar 2012.
66 Hoyland 1997b: 87, n. 65.
67 For example *RCEA* I: 42, dated AH 186/802–3 CE.
68 Karim 2003: 22–30; the reading of the person's father's name is uncertain.
69 van Berchem 1922: 17–21; Elad 1999; Cytryn-Silverman 2007; Sharon 1997–: III, 104–5.
70 Elad 1999: 36–7.
71 For more on this question, see Harjumäki and Lindstedt 2016.
72 For example Nevo, Cohen and Heftman 1993: 21, HS 3155–6(6); al-Muaikel 1988: I, 166, no. 7.
73 Kawatoko, Tokunaga and Iizuka 2005: 9–10 give the date as AH 27/647–8 CE but since the first tooth of the year is taller, the year should rather be read *tisʿ*, see Islamic Awareness 2014.
74 Al-Kilabi 2009: 70–1.
75 Al-Rashid 1993: 56–8.
76 Al-Thenayian 2015: 71–2.
77 Ory 1967: 100.
78 Al-Harithi 2007.
79 Sharafaddin 1977: 69–70.
80 Ory 1967: 100.
81 Nevo, Cohen and Heftman 1993: 36.
82 Hoyland 1997b: 97.
83 Al-ʿUshsh 1964: 361.
84 Imbert 2013: 734–6.
85 For example al-Rashid 2008: 60–1.
86 Al-Thenayian 2015: 71–2.
87 Al-Ḥarithi 2007.

88 Karim 2002: 298–99 reads *wa-yasʾalu allāh ḥamdan fī sabīlihi*, but I would emend *ḥ-m-dʾ* to *j-h-dʾ*.
89 Nevo, Cohen and Heftman 1993: 21; Sharon 1997–: III, 179–80.
90 Al-Rashid 1995: 99–100; al-Ḥarithi 1997: 102; al-Kilabi 2009: 189.
91 Al-Rashid 2008: 60–1 omits some words in his reading.
92 Al-Ḥarithi 2007, with some modification to the *editio princeps*. I thank Prof. Jaakko Hämeen-Anttila and Ghali Adi for discussing the reading of this important inscription with me.
93 See the chapter by Gerald Hawting in this volume.
94 Ghabban 2008: 211.
95 Imbert 2011: 64.
96 For the murder of ʿUthman, see Hinds 1972.
97 Kessler 1970; Hoyland 1997a: 696–9; Whelan 1998; Milwright 2016.
98 Al-Rashid 1995: 160–5; two of the graffiti mention the date AH 80/699–700 CE.
99 Imbert 2000.
100 Al-Rashid 1995, 26–9.
101 Al-Saʿid et al. 2017: 14.
102 The original publication gives *bi-yad*, which does not yield very good sense, as the editor, al-Rashid, admits. Imbert 2011: 67 repeats the erroneous reading and makes other mistakes in the transliteration. I thank Ghali Adi for noting (personal communication) that this rather usual phrase should be read *awṣā bi-birr allāh*.
103 Al-Rashid 1993: 83–6 dated this to AH 76/695–6 CE, but see Imbert 2011: 61, n. 3, according to whom the date AH 96/714–5 CE is more likely.
104 Al-Rashid 1995, 60–6, with references to similar verses in the Arabic literary evidence.
105 For example Nevo, Cohen and Heftman 1993: 21, no. HS 3153[6].
106 Sharon 1997: V, 288.
107 Imbert 2013: 746–7.
108 Macdonald 2005.
109 Al-Jbour 2001: 674.
110 Baramki 1964: 337.
111 Cooley 2012: 5.
112 Miles 1948; al-Rashid 2000: 46–60.
113 Kessler 1970.
114 Grohmann 1967–71: II, 84.
115 Hamilton 1946; Mayer 1946.
116 *RCEA*: I, no. 27.
117 Clermont-Ganneau 1900.
118 Khamis 2001.
119 Rihaoui 1961–62.
120 Vibergt-Guigue, Bisheh and Imbert 2007: 45–6; Imbert 2015.
121 Miles 1948.
122 Karim 2001.
123 Imbert 2013: 746–7.
124 Ghabban 2008: 213.
125 ʿAbd al-Tawab 1977: 2.
126 Karim 2003: 38–44.
127 Borrut 2011 and 2014.
128 Donner 2010.
129 For example Donner 2010: 78–82; Shoemaker 2014.

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CHAPTER TWENTY ONE

THE WRITTEN TRANSMISSION OF THE QUR'AN DURING UMAYYAD TIMES

Contextualising the Codex Amrensis 1[1]

Éléonore Cellard

INTRODUCTION

Recent studies of the oldest Qur'anic manuscripts have highlighted the prominent role of the written book within the early Muslim community. Thousands of Qur'anic fragments, initially neglected, genizah-like, in mosques are being rediscovered in library collections around the world. However, none of these early fragments preserve chronological or geographical details about their copying; these are found only in texts from the ninth century and later. This chapter proposes some new insights to the history of the written Qur'an during Umayyad times, based on analysis of the Codex Amrensis 1 (referred to subsequently as Codex A.1). It focuses on the context of the copying of this manuscript and establishes its place within the written transmission of the Qur'an.

Studying Qur'anic manuscripts requires the exploration of different sources of chronological and geographical information. Palaeography – the study of the script – aims to distinguish the successive steps in the elaboration of a specific Qur'anic script and its evolution over the centuries. It should also serve to identify regional styles and locate them. Codicology – the study of the material construction of the book itself – completes the description by the deep analysis of the Codex's structure, which also shows variation according to the different traditions and the different periods in which codices were produced.

On the textual level, the study of Qur'an manuscripts still relies heavily on the traditional Qur'anic sciences. It compares the manuscript in question to the 1924 Cairo edition and the huge number of traditional Islamic treatises about Qur'anic orthography, variant readings and variant division into verses. From these latter emerges the idea of an unchanging text, affected merely by regional variations, according to the several accepted schools. However, the chronological gap between the early Qur'anic manuscript fragments, from the second half of the seventh century, and the first works of Qur'anic science by Muslim scholars, from the ninth century, poses a major challenge. When early manuscripts are analysed, the later tradition does not seem to

reflect the whole textual transmission of the Qurʾan over time, but rather to convey a somewhat idealised, retrospective vision of the Qurʾan's history.[2]

Hence, this chapter is not directly concerned with the Islamic tradition's later accounts of the written transmission of the Qurʾan, but those accounts are an important part of the context for thinking about the Codex in question. The Islamic tradition offers several retrospective narratives that identify significant milestones within the course of the written transmission of the Qurʾan. According to these narratives, the Umayyads, and especially the Marwanid dynasty (684–750), were directly involved in the production of the written Qurʾan. The great expense they devote to ensuring the book's magnificence shows a growing interest in the physical presentation of the Qurʾan;[3] while their role in the introduction of textual reforms – orthography, reading and textual division – proves their deeply felt need to control the text. At the same time – and importantly for our purposes here – the traditional Islamic accounts attest to the production of Qurʾan manuscripts outside the court-sponsored framework. They indicate that early Muslim scholars were also engaged in the written production of Qurʾans. Several Companions of the Prophet Muhammad, such as Ibn Masʿud and Ubayy ibn Kaʿb, are said to have owned Qurʾanic books, which continued to circulate for a long time in some dissident circles.[4] Moreover, these authorities and others were also involved in serious disputes about the formal presentation of the Qurʾan, both as to its physical appearance and its text.[5] In other words, a competition between the official scriptoria and the more modest environments stimulated the production of Qurʾanic manuscripts during the Umayyad period.

When it comes to studies of actual Qurʾanic manuscripts, most recent studies have assumed some homogeneity in the written transmission of the early Qurʾan, both on physical and textual level.[6] All have focused on liturgical manuscripts or lectionaries, characterised by their large dimensions.[7] The specificities of their orthography (that is, the conventions used in writing them), switching between pre- and post-reformed styles, are a criterion of dating related to the Umayyad reform, with the chronology being calibrated according to their degree of orthographic modernisation. Thus, our understanding of Qurʾan production is actually based mainly on Umayyad official copies, produced under the patronage of members of the ruling Umayyad elite. However, very little is known about the low-cost production of Qurʾans, which could reflect either a private or an unofficial milieu. Codex A.1 provides some insights into such texts, and the evidence presented here may indicate that Codex A.1 could be a regional manuscript, written by a copyist familiar with scripts used in official Umayyad contexts. Certainly, it provides further evidence that parameters of the transmission were not yet fixed in the Umayyad period, and retained the possibility of individual expression by those who were responsible for copying it. Hence, Qurʾanic orthography could be linked to political claims, and, could be used as a way of showing allegiance to particular factions.

In what follows, key features of Codex A.1 are described in material, formal and textual terms.[8] Then, these features are compared to other manuscripts and to literary and historical data, in order to contextualise the writing of the Codex A.1. It is this analysis that leads to the hypothesis that Codex A.1 is likely a regional copy made by someone familiar with Umayyad official Qurʾans, in a context of political competition and contestation over the Qurʾanic text.

PART ONE: THE DESCRIPTION OF THE CODEX A.1

The Codex A.1 and the project Coranica

The recent edition of the Codex A.1 according the rules of diplomatic editing, and combined with a facsimile,[9] was part of the French-German project Coranica (2011–15). One of the main objectives of this project was to focus on the chronology of the Qurʾan, trying to collect and study all the written evidence, especially manuscript fragments, datable to the seventh century. Selecting suitable manuscripts was an early challenge, carried out by the use of a palaeographical criterion: all the fragments should be classified as Hijazi style. That is, written in an archaic script in which vertical strokes are inclined to the right.[10]

Among the collected fragments, one in particular captured my attention, because of its horizontal orientation, contrasting with the vertical orientation of the rest of the collection. Some parts of this manuscript were already known by the specialists and two hypotheses concerning its date have been proposed by François Déroche and Alain George, based on paleographic criteria. According to them, the use of the archaic Hijaz script, adapted to a horizontal format, reflects a later practice, probably during the eighth century. Concerning the social circle in which this manuscript could have been produced, Déroche and George consider this copy as 'a conscious reference to the Hijazi past and the oldest written form of the Qurʾan',[11] assuming probably that it was produced in a conservative context.

However, no deep study had been conducted on it before the project Coranica. Two new parameters allowed us embark on the study of the Codex A.1. First, the project gathered a number of other folios belonging to the same codicological unit, dispersed in many library collections and auctions catalogues. Second, other fragments with the same features have been collected since, offering the possibility of evaluating the significance of the peculiarities of the Codex A.1.

History of the Codex A.1

There is much evidence that the manuscript was originally kept in the mosque of ʿAmr ibn al-ʿAs in Fustat, now situated in the Old Cairo. This is why we decided to call it Codex Amrensis 1 (Codex A.1). It consists of 75 folios on parchment, dispersed in four different collections.

The history of two sequences of its folios is well known.[12] A first sequence of 32 folios is now preserved at the National Library of Russia in Saint Petersburg (Marcel 9, fos.1–32). During Napoleon's Egyptian campaign of 1798–1801, the orientalist Jean-Joseph Marcel visited a room of the ʿAmr mosque and acquired several Qurʾanic fragments including these 32 folios. When he died, his collection was bought by the Imperial Library of Saint Petersburg (now National Library of Russia). Since then, it has remained unchanged as J.-J. Marcel classified it. Six other folios are in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France (BnF Arabe 326, fos.1–6), and these derive from the collection of Asselin de Cherville (1772–1822), former French consul in Cairo. A few years after Jean-Joseph Marcel had visited the mosque, Asselin de Cherville visited it. De Cherville was a student of Silvestre de Sacy (1758–1838), from whom he received his knowledge of early Qurʾanic scripts. Asselin de Cherville built up an important

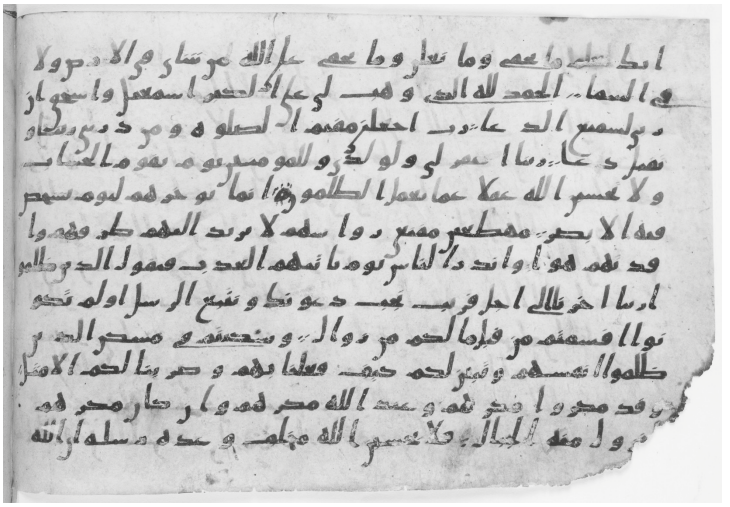


Figure 21.1 The Codex Amrensis 1, Paris, BnF Arabe 326a, fo.3a. Permission of Bibliothèque nationale de France.

collection of Qur'anic manuscripts, carefully selected for their paleographic criteria. After De Cherville's death, the Bibliothèque Impériale (today Bibliothèque Nationale de France) acquired his collection. At the Library, the fragments were regrouped in accordance with their formats and scripts and then bound in several florilegia.

Two other sequences from the Codex A.1 found their way on to the antiques market. Like the first two sequences, the fragments are unequally dispersed. A first collection of 36 folios was bought in Rennes, in September 2011, and is now in the Museum of Islamic Art at Doha (MIA.2013.29.1 and MIA.2013.29.2). These folios were preserved by an antiquities dealer in Paris, who probably acquired them in Cairo in the 1920s.[13] Two sequences constitute this set: a first sequence of 29 folios (Rennes I/ Doha, MIA.2013.29.1) and a second of seven folios (Rennes II/ Doha, MIA.2013.29.2). Finally, a last folio is kept in the Nasser D. Khallili Collection of Islamic Art (KFQ34).

Palaeography of Codex A.1

In general, the text of Codex A.1 is copied respecting the rule of the oldest *scriptio continua* – that is, the same regular space is inserted between words and between the non-joined letters within words alike. There are 12 lines per page, except in three folios which have 11 or 13 lines. In this early tradition, a word can be cut at the end of the line, but only if there is a non-joined letter. However, this rule cannot be applied at the end of the page where the complete word must be written. In many cases, when confronted with a long word at the end of the page, the copyist ignores the justification of the rest of the text on the page and completes the word on the same line. More rarely, if it overtakes the justification, it can be written under the text-box, as in Saint Petersburg, NLR, M9, fo.16b, where we observe the word *kānū* with *-nū* written under the text and then erased.

Table 21.1 Letters without variation.

Letter	*Image*	*Description*
Alif		The letter has a slanting stroke to the right and a short return.
Initial ***jīm***		The letter is short and curved.
Medial ***jīm***		The letter crosses the baseline.
Initial ***ʿayn***		The letter has a short, straight hook.
Medial ***ʿayn***		The right arm of the letter is right and thinner.
Isolated ***lām***		It has a short return which does not reach below the baseline.
Final ***mīm***		The letter has a circular body which reaches slightly the baseline.
Medial ***hā'***		The letter has a long bar which slopes to the left.

The script of the Codex A.1 presents slanting strokes to the right, and thus is classified in the *Ḥiǧāzī I* of Déroche's palaeography. The script's appearance is thin and proportioned, with a tendency for lengthening oblique endings (especially the endings of the letters *alif maqsura* and *qaf*) and for amplifying the curves of letters in final or isolated positions (such as *jim/ha/khaʾ* and *ʿayn*). The drawing of the letters is relatively homogeneous in the whole manuscript, although there are some variations in the proportions of letters, inclination and thickness of the script: for example, the inclination is more pronounced on the Saint Petersburg, NLR, M9, fo.5b. However, study of the palaeographical shapes indicates that the manuscript is not the result of collective work.

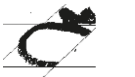
Eight letters present a single fixed form (see Table 21.1).

Eight other letters know three variant shapes – two shapes are distinct and the third is a hybrid of the other two (see Table 21.2). These variations sometimes appear on the same page, and so should be attributed to the same copyist. Consequently, the copyist could choose between several patterns for a single letter. Among these variations, six are particularly recurrent:

Codicology of the Codex A.1

We can distinguish four main textual sequences in the present fragments, which correspond respectively to the second and fourth quarters of the Qurʾan and cover about 17 per cent of the Qurʾanic text. Occasionally, these sequences are interrupted by the lack of one or more leaves.

Table 21.2 Letters with variant shapes.

Letter	*Image*	*Description*
Final or isolated *jīm* /*ḥā'*/*khā'* (idem for isolated *'ayn*)		The tail has generally a curved shape. This shape is the most recurrent.
		The tail of *jīm* has a horizontal shape.
		Hybrid shape of the two formers (half-curved shape).
Final and isolated *qāf* (idem for final *alif maqsūra*)		The tail is oblique and straight, overly elongated. It ends with a short hook.
		The tail is short and continues with an open curve.
		Hybrid shape of the two formers: the tail is shortened, and the end in U-shaped is enlarged with its branches parallel to the baseline.
Final or isolated *kāf*		The base of the letter is longer than its upper horizontal stroke. The elongation is frequently short, except some examples in S. Petersburg, M.9.
		The base of the letter is shorter than its upper horizontal stroke.
Final or isolated *ṭā'*		The horizontal baseline of the letter stops at the beginning of the vertical shaft, which slants to the right.
		The horizontal baseline of the letter is elongated by a long downward appendage. This variation has been observed seven times in Saint Petersburg, Marcel 9. In all of them, except one (f°27a), the tail has been erased.

The manuscript had probably already lost its binding in the mosque of ʿAmr, but the continuity of many textual sequences (see Table 21.3) suggests that several quires (four sheets of parchment folded to form eight folios), and probably groups of quires, still survived. Twelve quires are extant, partially mutilated (see Table 21.4). The entire manuscript would have contained approximately 320 folios – that is to say 40 quires. The quires are systematically *quaternions* (made of four bifolios, or 16 pages). As with all such early manuscripts, the folios are parchment made from sheep or goat skin. The arrangement of the parchment's bifolios respects 'Gregory's rule': as

Table 21.3 Sequences of the Codex A.1.

Sequence		*Qur'ānic text*	*Source*
I.	1.	8: 1–11:79	S. Petersburg, NLR Marcel 9
	2.	12 :96–12:111	Paris, BNF, Arabe 326, f.1
	3.	14 :16–15:99	Paris, BNF, Arabe 326, ff.2–6
II.	4.	40 :66–43:31	Rennes I (ff.1–10)
	5.	43 :73–52:38	Rennes I (ff.11–29)
	6.	57 :13–57:23	Khalili Collection, KFQ 34
	7.	58 :3–62:3	Rennes II

Table 21.4 Reconstitution of the quires.

Number and type of quire (number of folios)	*Fragment*
[11 IV]	*Missing*
4 IV (32)	M.9
IV -7 (1)/ *[IV → missing]*/ IV -3 (6)	Arabe 326 a
[12 IV]	*Missing*
IV -1 (7), IV -2 (13), 2 IV (29)	Rennes I
IV -7 (1)	KFQ34
IV -1 (7)	Rennes II
[4 IV]	*Missing*

in most of the Greek or Coptic manuscripts, flesh faces flesh, and hair faces hair. Each quire opens with a flesh side.[14]

The maximum dimensions of the folios are 178 millimetres high by 288 millimetres wide (this is the measure of the S. Petersburg, NLR, M.9 fo.20). These correspond to a fair size *in-octavo* (in book format). The parchment is thick, without holes, with a small contrast between the flesh side and the hair side. On each open bifolio, we find a marked justification and line-by-line ruling, incised with a dry point. In the external margins, we can observe traces of pricking, used for tracing horizontal lines.

Textual analysis: orthography

Comparison between the text of the Codex A.1 and the 1924 Cairo edition reveals numbers of deviations, involving mostly the notation of the *matres lectionis*, or the 'mothers of reading' – that is, the three consonants, *alif*, *waw* and *ya*ʾ, used to mark vowels. Such deviations are especially common with *alif*. That said, excluding these, there are still another 85 variants of the consonantal skeleton, or *rasm*: suppressions, additions or changes of consonants. In each of these, the copyist's mistakes have to be distinguished from traditional variants. When the same variant appears several times, it could be the copyist's practice.

Omission of letters

The most frequent orthographic variation is omission of letters. It represents 34.5 per cent of all variants, excluding those concerning the *alif*. More than half of these omissions are probably due to a copyist's mistake. The other omissions certainly stem from copyists' traditions and concerns:

- The *alif* with the value of long vowel /ā/ is often omitted (*scriptio defectiva*). However, the copyist's orthographical rules are ambiguous and heterogeneous. The *alif* never appears in the verb *qāla*. The plural form of the same verb, *qālū*, keeps the *alif* in 45.5 per cent of the cases. Sometimes, the *scriptio defectiva* appears along with the plural spelling in the same folio, one on the recto and the other on the verso (as on the S. Petersburg, NLR, M.9, fo.32), but there is no occurrence of the two orthographies on the same page. Similar variations occur for other words. In rare cases with these other words, the two orthographies appear on the same page (*adhāb:* S. Petersburg, NLR, M.9 fo.29a; *jannāt:* S. Petersburg, NLR, M.9 fo.12b).
- The *alif al-wiqaya* ('alif of protection', placed after a final *waw* in third person plural verbs) is omitted in the plural verb *rāʾū* (example: 10:54, S. Petersburg, NLR, M.9, fo.22a).
- The long vowel /ū/ does not appear in the word *ʾūlū* (8:75; 9:86; 14:52; 46:35).
- The glottal stop (*hamza*) is also affected by this orthographical fluctuation. For example, the verb *saʾaltukum* (10:72) is written without *alif*, while *saʾaltumūh* (14:34) keeps the *alif*. The word *qurʾān* is written without *alif* (9:111; 10:37; 15:81 and 87), except in 15:1 where it has the *alif*. The same is true for words where the *hamza* follows the long vowel /ā/. For example, in 10:28 (S. Petersburg, NLR, M.9 fo.20b), the first occurrence *shurakāʾukum* is written without *waw*, while the second one is written with it.
- The long vowel /ī/ is generally written in the name *ibrāhīm* with four exceptions: two at 9:114, and one at 14:35 and 42:13, respectively.
- Another orthographic feature concerns the notation of the article *al-*, when it is associated with the particle *bi-*. In 17 per cent of the occurrences, the initial *alif* disappears. This phenomenon is particularly frequent in the word *bi-l-ḥaqq*, written *baʾ - lam - haʾ - qaf* in half of the occurrences (S. Petersburg, NLR, M.9, fos.4a, 12b; Paris, BnF, Ar.326 fo.2a; RI fos.12b, 13b, 14a and 14b). It occurs also in other formulae, as *bi-l-maʿrūf* (without *alif* in 9:71; with *alif* in 9:112) and *bi-l-qisṭ* (without *alif* in 10:47 and 10:54; with *alif* in 10:4 and 11:85).
- The particle *fā'* is omitted before *bi-mā* at 42:30 (R.I, fo.7b). This variant without *fa-* is attributed by the traditional accounts to the codices of Medina and Damascus.[15]

Additional letters

In some rare cases, the manuscript includes additional letters. Where these occur systematically, they are *matres lectionis*, *alif*, *waw*, and *yaʾ*. These additional letters

make up 27 per cent of all the variants. In the absence of such evidence in other documents, we should consider that 75 per cent of the additional letters are copyist's mistakes. Some other variants appear frequently and thus could be attributed to a written tradition:

- Thus, the term *ʾilāh*, written without medial *alif*, is sometimes noted with a *yaʾ* (one example at 9:128, S. Petersburg, NLR, M.9, fo.17b). The same goes for the orthography of *ʾāyal/ʾāyāt*, including an additional *yaʾ* when the word is preceded by the particle *bi-*.
- The orthography of the word *shayʾ* is subject to variations between the correct Arabic form, without *alif*, and another form with *alif*. This later form appears in 70 per cent of the occurrences.
- The pronoun *dhū* includes also a final *alif*, after *waw* (10:60, S. Petersburg, NLR, M.9, fo.22b. And 41:35, Rennes I, fo.4r). The same orthography applies to the word *al-sūʾ* (60:2, R.II, fo.5a).

Different letters

The last category variants of the consonantal skeleton, or *rasm*, concerns the substitution of a different letter (which represents 21.1 per cent of the *rasm* variants). As with the preceding orthographical variations, such changes concern principally the *matres lectionis*, and more rarely the consonants:

- The word *zakāt* written with *alif* (9:5 and 11, S. Petersburg, NLR, M.9, fos.6b and 7a.) instead of *waw* (9:18 and 71, S. Petersburg, NLR, M.9, fos.7b and 12b; 58:13, Rennes I, fo.2a).
- In the words *ʾāyal/ʾāyāt* and *ʾilāh*, the *alif* can be substituted by *yaʾ*. Other words are also concerned (*ʾaḥyāhā*, 41:39; *sayyiʾa*, 42:48). We include also here the inverse rule for the final *alif maqsūra*, written as *alif mamdūda* (*maḍā*, 43:8; *ʾilā*, 46:5).
- The *waw* carrying the glottal stop in the word *luʾlu* (52:24, R.I, fo.29b) is substituted by an *alif*.
- The word *rijza* is written *rijsa* with *sin* instead of *zay* (8:11, S. Petersburg, NLR, M.9, fo.1b). This variant is attributed to the Reader and Companion Abu-l-ʿAliya.

Probable copyists' errors or traditional practice

Finally, there are some textual variants which could be due to a copyist's mistake (the copyist often corrects himself) or traditional practices: change of case ending: *al-muʾminūna* instead of *al-muʾminīna* (8:17, S. Petersburg, NLR, M.9, fo.2a); change of term and then self-correction: *al-mushrikūna* instead of *al-shākirīna* (10:22, S. Petersburg, NLR, M.9, fo.19b); change of preposition: *fā* instead of *wāw* (43:87, R.I, fo.11b); and change of conjugation, then correction: *kharajūna* instead of *kharajū* (47:16, R.I, fo.19) and *yafsidūna* instead of *yafsidū* (47:22, R.I, fo.19).

Textual analysis: diacritical signs

Consonants

The diacritical marks are represented by oblique dashes. That they are written with the same ink as the letter forms themselves shows that they are contemporary with them. On many occasions, their position – or their number – does not correspond to the established system of diacritics. Except for *qaf* and *fa'*, which are systematically noted with a dash above (for *qaf*) and a dash below (for *fa'*), most of the letters associated with diacritical signs show fluctuations. Some variations are probably due to transpositions (the dash is placed on the preceding or next letter) or inversions (for instance, *bi-ruknihi*, R.II fo.28a, has a dash above initial *ba'* and another below medial *nun*). Other variations remain obscure: some are referring to a different letter's reading (the expected *ta'* is dotted like *tha'*, with three dots above, on at least ten occasions); others are using an unknown system (for example, the use of dashes placed both above and below the letter).

Lam-alif

Another great peculiarity of this manuscript is the addition of one or two dashes next to isolated *lam-alif* (see Figure 21.2). We observed this phenomenon in 20 per cent of occurrences.

These dashes appear regardless of the linguistic purpose of *lam-alif*: negation (*lā*), article *al-* and initial *alif* (for example: *al-arḍ*), exception (*illā*), *lam* of word's radical and *alif* of case ending (*rasūlan*). A satisfactory explanation remains to be found.

Diacritical marks and variant readings

In the manuscript, imperfect verbs are usually punctuated by the copyist. The dotting reveals a great number of variants involving a change of person. Some of them are . Permission of Bibliothèque nationale de France. well attested by the tradition, and

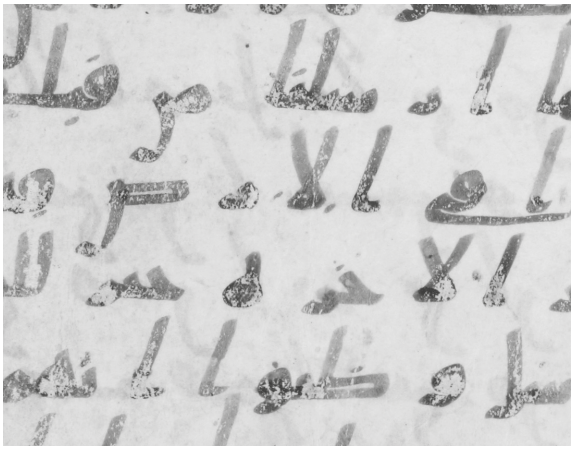


Figure 21.2 Diacritical marks on *lām-alif*, Paris, BnF Arabe 326, fo.1b, l.7. Permission of Bibliothèque nationale de France.

Table 21.5 Reading variants.

Variant's type	*Traditional reading's variants*	*Unknown variants*	*Total*
Yā' becomes *tā'*	11	20	31
Yā' becomes *nūn*	4	13	17

Table 21.6 Reading attributions.

Reader	*Died in*	*Locality*	*Variants' percentage*
al-A'raj	AD 117 AH./735.	Medina	53%
Ibn 'Āmir	AD 118 AH./736.	Damascus	
Ḥasan al-Baṣrī	AD 110 AH./728.	Basra	47%
Abū Ja'far	AD 130 AH./747.	Medina	41%
Nāfi'	AD 169 AH./785.	Medina	

thus, are authentic grammatical variants, rather than simply errors. Among the 61 variants we have noticed, there are two recurrent types involving the prefix of the third person *yā-* (see Table 21.5).

Only 28 per cent of these variants are known by the Tradition and are principally attributed to Syrian or Medinan Readers of the end of the seventh century and beginning of the eighth century (see Table 21.6).

Textual analysis: division into verses

The text reveals two successive steps of division: a first division into verses by the copyist himself is indicated by groups of strokes without a systematic pattern. In a second stage, another hand added an oval symbol, sometimes looking like a tree leaf for separating groups of verses. The number of verse markers between two 'tree leaf' symbols is usually seven or eight, or, more rarely, ten.

There are two tendencies in the frequency of verse divisions. In the first part of the manuscript, that is in M.9 and Ar.326, the copyist seems to be more meticulous in the notation of verse divisions (5 per cent of the verse divisions are missing). He regularly adds more divisions than those contained in the 1924 Cairo edition. In contrast, in the second part of the manuscript – that is in R.I, II and KFQ34 – 33 per cent of the verse divisions are missing.

A comparison between the manuscript's system of verse division and the reports in Islamic traditional sources[16] does not permit a strict attribution to any well-known traditional system. It appears that only 4 per cent of the manuscript's variant divisions are known to the tradition. They are mostly in accord with the system of Medina (82.3 per cent) and Syria (79.4 per cent), but only occasionally with the Kufan system (44 per cent). However, a great number of verses are not indicated on our manuscript: in total, 16.3 per cent of the verse divisions found in the Cairo

edition are not represented. Once again, these missing divisions are known only partially (15 per cent) by the tradition. Six per cent of the additional divisions, including the separation of the *basmala*,[17] do not correspond to any regional system. A survey of the 61 additional divisions reveals that almost 30 per cent of them correspond to the exact location of a *waqf* (pause), ten per cent are near a *waqf*, but cut the sentence on an internal rhyme, 15 per cent fit with a rhyme or a frequent ending word, another ten per cent isolate a type-formula,[18] and only 15 per cent could serve as a semantic separation.

PART TWO: CONTEXTUALISING CODEX A.1

The evidence suggests that Codex A.1 is not an isolated case in the long history of the written transmission of the Qur'an, but rather belongs to a family of manuscripts. Several of its characteristics are already found in other fragments. The most obvious ones are these two fragments kept in the Musée des Arts Islamiques, Kairouan (R119 and P511), which adopt exactly the same formal characteristics. A third fragment, from the Bibliothèque Nationale de France's collection (Paris, BnF Arabe 326b), also shows an identical presentation. In this section, Codex A.1 is compared in more detail with other manuscripts in order to evaluate its characteristics and situate it in the history of the written transmission of the Qur'an. The evidence tends to suggest that it belongs in the Umayyad era, and that the copyist was aware of official Umayyad-era Qur'ans.

Two specific sets of manuscripts (see Table 21.7) can contribute to identifying this context for the production of Codex A.1 and its family. The first group is classified as the A group by Déroche.[19] This group, featuring a very homogeneous script (see Figure 21.3), has been identified on approximately 64 folios, belonging to three different fragmentary vertical *in-quarto* manuscripts[20] and two oblong *in-octavo*[21] manuscripts originating from Fustat, in Egypt. The second set of manuscripts are more problematic because of their stylistic heterogeneity.[22] Nevertheless, some common features regarding both material and text lead us to form a provisional group from them. This group comprises more than 140 folios, corresponding to three *in-quarto* manuscripts, and several smaller damaged fragments. Their scripts (see Figure 21.4) have features derived from Hijazi A script and, to a lesser extent, B.I;[23] thus, we will refer to this second provisional group as Late Hijazi/A (LH/A). Furthermore, a Carbon-14 analysis has recently proposed an Umayyad date for Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Ms.or.fol.4313,[24] which confirms the palaeographical evidence (see Figure 21.7 – folios belonging to the same manuscript in the Egyptian National Library).

A comparison between these *in-quarto* fragments and Codex A suggest a potential Umayyad attribution for the latter.

Palaeography: Codex A.1 and the LH/A and A families

In general appearance, the copyists of the LH/A and A groups respect the same traditions concerning the disposition of the text-box. Like Codex A.1, the LH/A manuscripts sometimes follow the curious habit of writing the final words on a page under the text-box (Paris, BnF Arabe 330g, fo.60a; Qāf 47,[25] fo.10a). This peculiarity does not appear in the A and LH/A-A manuscripts (see Figure 21.5).

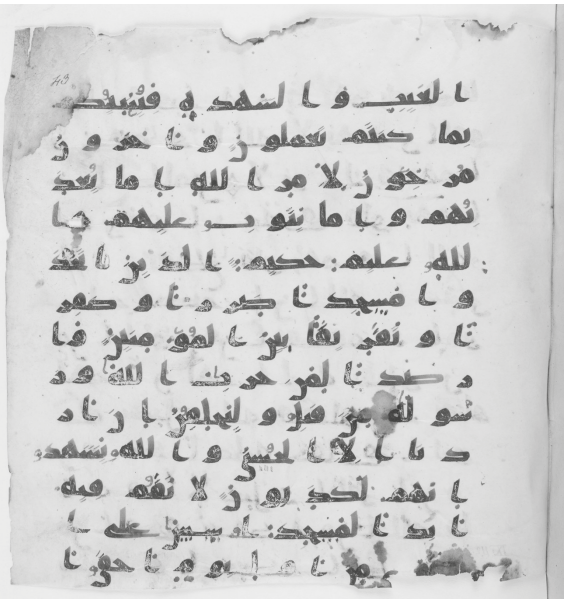


Figure 21.3 The A script. Paris BnF Arabe 330f, fo.43a.
Permission of Bibliothèque nationale de France.

A comparison of the detailed palaeography of the two groups reveals distinctive scripts (see Table 21.8). Nevertheless, all the scripts share significant elements with the script of Codex A.1:

- Frequency of large, open curves for final *qaf* and *alif maqsura*.
- Three optional shapes for the final or isolated *ḥaʾ/khaʾ/jim* or isolated *ʿayn* (horizontal, half-curved, curved).
- Prominent and oblique bar of the letter *haʾ*.
- Appendage – more or less accentuated – at the baseline of the letter *ṭaʾ* in final position.

The regular and well-proportioned script of Codex A.1 undeniably corresponds to the A script, as it is found in the two Parisian fragments: Paris, BnF Arabe 326b and 330f. However, a detailed analysis of the script of the latter reveals that the A group contains fewer variations in letter shapes than Codex A.1. The ratio of variations in letter shapes could be related to the manuscript's dimensions.[26] During the eighth century, the larger-size manuscripts may have used a homogeneous script and then served as models for the smaller ones. This could be the case for Codex A.1, which mixes variant shapes from both the LH/A and A groups. Moreover, two of its variant shapes, derived from LH/A (final *ʿayn* and final *qaf*), are known in the other *in-octavo* fragment, BnF Arabe 326b (see Figure 21.6). Unfortunately, at the moment we do not have enough material for the *in-octavo* manuscripts in A script to establish an exhaustive palaeography.[27]

The links between the LH/A series, the A group and the Codex A.1 are most likely to be explained by their being contemporary styles, which interacted with each other

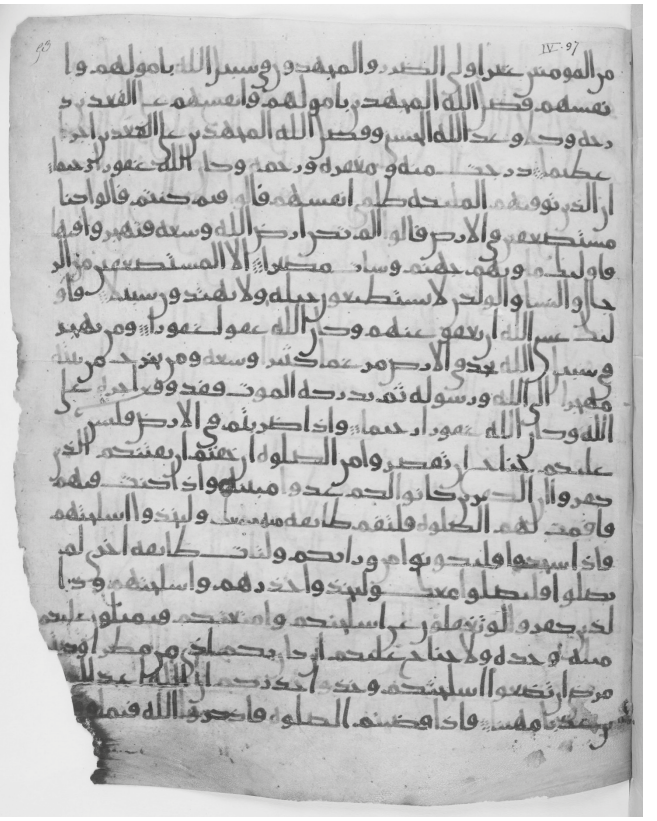


Figure 21.4 The LH/A script. Paris, BnF Arabe 330g, fo.53a. Permission of Bibliothèque nationale de France.

during the Umayyad period. Indeed, al-Nadim mentions in his *Fihrist* the creation of several styles by the calligrapher Qutba al-Muharrir (d. in AH 152/770 CE): 'Qutba was the first transcriber during the period of the Banu Umayya. He developed the four forms of writing, deriving one from the other.'[28]

Codicology

A recent study has shown that geography was probably one of the most significant criteria in the way of constituting the Codex.[29] In other words, regional traditions override sectarian affiliation in the material production and assembly of early Qur'an manuscripts. Following this line of reasoning, Codex A.1 appears to belong to a corpus of manuscripts from the same geographical area, perhaps in Palestine or Egypt.

The most significant codicological convergence between the LH/A and A manuscripts and Codex A.1 is undoubtedly their specific way of constituting the quires. Our observations of the whole corpus highlight a clear preference for the *quaternion*, and respect for Gregory's rule. These parameters are already known from the earliest Qur'ans: the Codex Parisino-petropolitanus is indeed composed

Table 21.7 List of the studied manuscripts LH/A and A scripts.

Script	*Codicological unit*[1]	*Fragments*	*Folios*
A script	1	Paris, BNF Arabe 330d	2
		San-Petersburg, Marcel 20 (fos.1–4)	4
	2	Paris, BNF Arabe 330e	9
		San-Petersburg, Marcel 20 (fos.5–16)	11
		Rome, Bibliotheca Vaticana, Ms Arab.1605 (ff°21–25)	5
	3	Paris, BNF Arabe 330f (fos.31–49)	19
		Chicago, Oriental Institute, A6963 et A6992	2
LH/A script	4	Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, Is.1615 I	47
		Doha, Museum of Islamic Art, Ms. 68, 69, 70, 699	14
		Houston, TR: 490–2007	1
	5	Paris, BNF, Arabe 330g	19
		San-Petersburg, Marcel 16	12
		Doha, Museum of Islamic Art, MIA.2013.23	6
		Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, Is.1615II	4
	6	Bergsträsser's Archives, Qāf 47 (see Figure 21.7)	31
		Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Ms. or fol. 4313	7
Hybrid style (LH/A-A)	7	Kairouan, MIA, R119	86
	8	Paris, BNF Arabe 326b (fos.7–9)	2

1 The assigned number is provisory.

of *quaternions*, respecting Gregory's rule. This technique is generally linked to the Greek, Palestinian Christian and Coptic manuscript traditions. In contrast, most of the later manuscripts, in Late Hijazi and other styles seem to prefer another tradition, similar to the Syriac one,[30] employing *quinions* (five bifolios folded to form ten folio quires), with folios arranged flesh sides facing to hair sides. The latter becomes the standard procedure, despite some hesitation during the first half of the eighth century, specifically in the *in-folio* manuscripts written in the C style.

In the material of the parchment itself, the two groups LH/A and A use two distinct types of parchment. The first one is specific to the three *in-quarto* manuscripts from the LH/A group. The skin contains a number of defects probably due to the proximity of the skin's edges and its clumsy treatment to make it into parchment (example on San-Petersburg, NLR, Marcel 16, fo. 6). Excessive stretching caused several holes (examples on Paris, BnF Arabe 330g, fos. 57 and 58). Moreover, the great variability of thickness from one folio to another, combined with the excessive stretching, produced a strong effect of transparency (examples on Dublin, CBL Is 1615I, fos.10 and 14). In contrast, the A group and Codex A.1 have better quality parchment, without the aforementioned defects. However, they show the same variability of thickness between the folios.[31]

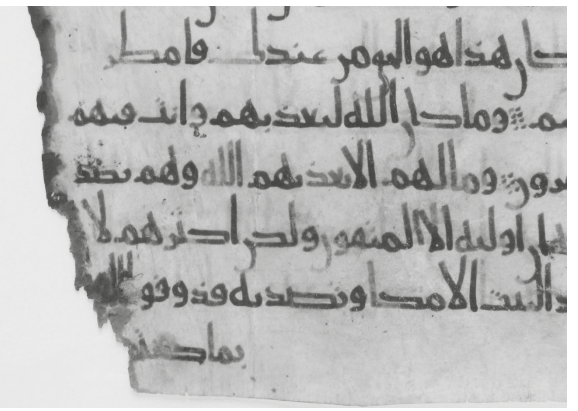
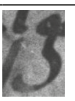
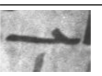


Figure 21.5 Writing under the text-box, Paris, BnF Arabe 330g, fo.60a. Permission of Bibliothèque nationale de France.

Table 21.8 Comparison of individual letters' shapes.

	Qāf 47	*Paris BnF Ar. 330g*	*Codex A.1*	*Paris BnF Arabe 326b*	*Paris BnF Ar. 330f*
Final *qaf*					
jim/ḥaʾ/khaʾ					
haʾ					
Final *ṭaʾ*					

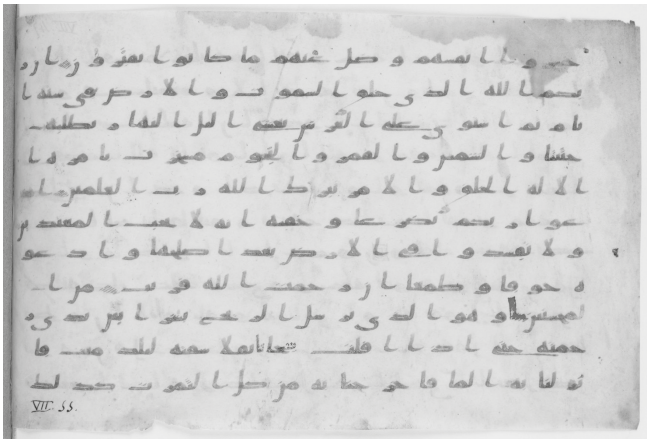


Figure 21.6 Paris, BnF Arabe 326b, fo.8b. Permission of Bibliothèque nationale de France.

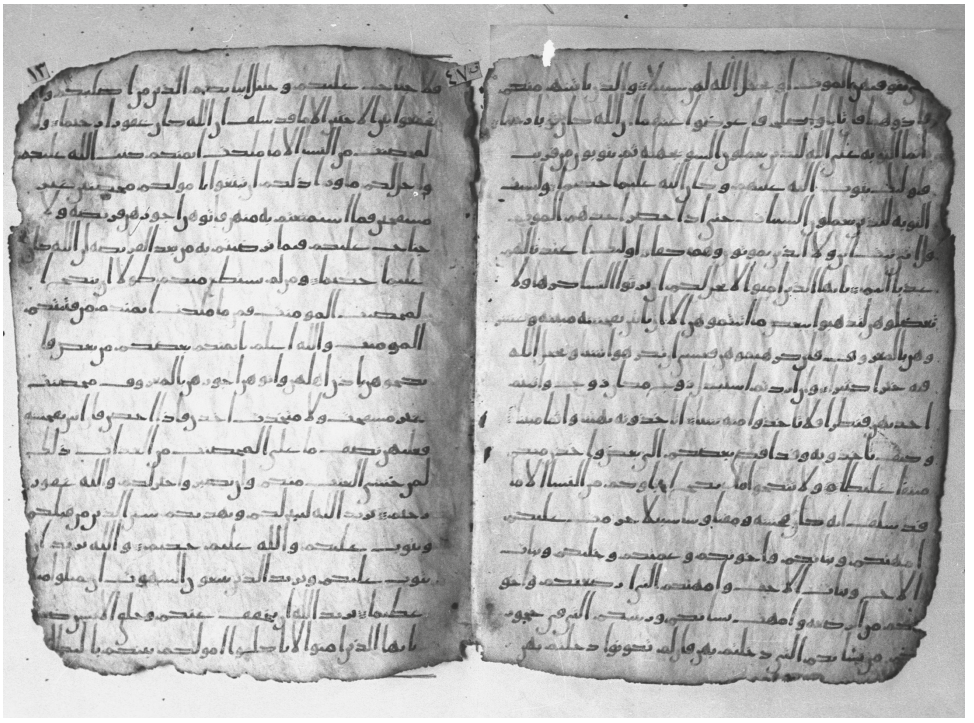


Figure 21.7 Gotthelf Bergsträsser photoarchive, Qāf 47, fos.13b–14a.
Permission of Corpus Coranicum BBAW.

Parchment quality could give some information about the chronology and the environment in which the manuscripts were produced. The great Umayyad manuscripts often used thin and flexible parchment (Paris BnF Arabe 330c), while the Codex Parisino-petropolitanus and the later manuscripts – such as the C manuscripts, from the eighth century[32] – use a thicker, rigid, one. The quality of the skin could reflect a local tradition of producing parchment, but we should isolate the LH/A group from the A group and Codex A.1. That all the manuscripts in question respect Gregory's rule might indicate a Palestinian or Egyptian provenance, since the Greek, Aramean Christian Palestinian and Coptic tradition of Gregory's rule was well established in these regions.

Textual comparison: a tradition against others

The Islamic narratives suggest that there was competition between the official Qurʾan scriptoria and more modest loci of production, and that this may have stimulated the production of manuscripts during the Umayyad period.[33] The evidence from Codex A.1 appears to match this context of multiple centres of production, and competition between them. Because of the fragmentary character of our documents, comparison between Codex A.1 and other manuscripts is confined in most cases below to short textual sequences.

Orthography

One of the main conclusions already drawn above from the orthographic analysis of Codex A.1 is the confusing and irregular way copyists followed various rules, especially for the notation of the *alif* as *mater lectionis* (a vowel marker). The notation of *alif* with the value of long vowel /ā/ represents the most frequent orthographical variation within the Qurʾanic manuscripts of the first three centuries.[34] If we compare two manuscripts, the Codex Parisino-petropolitanus, from the second half of the seventh century, and the Meknes manuscript,[35] datable to the ninth century, we could observe that in all the instances, the first one writes the words *qālū* and *ʿadẖāb* systematically without the long /ā/ vowel marked by *alif* (*scriptio defective*); while the second one consistently marks the long /ā/ vowel in these words (*scriptio plena*). Thus, the Codex Parisino-petropolitanus and the Meknes manuscript could represent two milestones attesting the introduction of the *alif* as *mater lectionis* (vowel marker). Codex A.1 might be situated between these milestones. Indeed, the manuscript preserves in many cases idiosyncratic spellings and alternative orthography to such an extent that one wonders if the copyist was really following any rule at all.

When the *alif* as *mater lectionis* in Codex A.1 and the other manuscripts are compared it can be seen that orthographical modernisation does not follow a clear linear progression. Indeed, the text maintains the old orthography in some instances, but uses the new one in others. We shall limit ourselves here to the example of *ʿadhāb*. Table 21.9 illustrates the orthographic options for this word in several manuscripts.[36] All of them reflect the hesitation between the two orthographic possibilities. The Codex A.1 and its correlative manuscripts are written in red.

These examples highlight two further noteworthy facts. First, the orthography chosen does not depend on any grammatical context (the verses 34/52 and 61/68 of the ninth *sura* show a similar construction but adopt a different orthography). Second, the complete body of evidence reveals both connections and contrasts between the manuscripts. Indeed, the Codex A.1 and the LH/A group share the same orthographic orientations for all the 19 compared instances, except for 10:15.[37] If we compare these instances to other manuscripts, such as the London, BL Or.2165, more than half of these adopt the opposite orthography from those in the Codex A.1.

A more wide-ranging textual comparison of Codex A.1 with other manuscripts highlights the frequency of the same particular spellings and permits us to place our fragment within a wider set of manuscripts written in several scripts, all datable to the end of the seventh century of beginning of the eighth century (LH, B.I, A and hybrid styles from these scripts). These specific spellings already exist in the Codex Parisino-petropolitanus, but have almost entirely disappeared in the Meknes Codex:

- The long vowel /ū/ doesn't appear in the word *ʾūlū*.
- The *alif al-wiqaya* in the plural verb *rāʾū* is omitted.
- The long vowel /ī/ is sometimes missing in the name *ibrāhīm*.
- The glottal stop (*hamzah*) is not directly represented by a specific sign, but is implied by the use of *alif*, *waw* or *ya'*, as carrier of the *hamzah*. The usage of these letters varies: in some instances, the carrier of the *hamzah* completely disappears; in others, it appears whereas it is not represented in the *rasm* of the Cairo Edition; the choice of carrier also varies (*alif* instead of *ya'* or *waw*).

Table 21.9 Orthographical options for *ʿadhāb*.

	ʿaḏāb (scriptio defectiva)	*ʿaḏab (scriptio plena)*
9 :34	Codex A.1 Paris, BNF Arabe 330g Codex Parisino-petropolitanus	London, British Library, Or.2165 Paris, BNF, Arabe 6140a Berlin, SBB, We.1913 Paris, BNF, Arabe 331 G.-B.-Archiv, Meknes
9 :39	Codex A.1 Paris, BNF Arabe 330g Codex Parisino-petropolitanus Paris, BNF, Arabe 6140a	London, BL, Or.2165 G.-B.-Archiv, Meknes
9 :52	London, BL, Or.2165 G.-B.-Archiv, Saray Medina 1a Berlin, SBB, We.1913	Codex A.1 Paris, BNF Arabe 330g
9 :61	London, BL, Or.2165 Berlin, SBB, We.1913	Codex A.1 Paris, BNF Arabe 330g Parsis, BNF Arabe 330f G.-B.-Archiv, Saray Medina 1a G.-B.-Archiv, Meknes
9 :68	Codex A.1 Paris, BNF Arabe 330g London, BL, Or.2165 Paris, BNF, Arabe 6140a	Berlin, SBB, We.1913

- The orthography of the word *shayʾ* is subject to variations between the more usual Arabic form, without *alif*, and another form with *alif*.
- The spelling of *ʾāyalʾāyāt*, including an additional *yaʾ* when the word is preceded by the particle *bi-*.

Hence, these manuscripts suggest the existence of an intermediate phase – probably at the beginning of the eighth century – where the ancient orthography was still in use. Moreover, rarer spellings found in Codex A.1 are also existent in the LH/A and A fragments:

- The notation of the article *al-* without initial *alif* when it is associated with the particle *bi-*. This spelling is quite irregular, although the manuscripts agree on the places where they have to use it. For example, the Paris, BnF Arabe 330g uses the defective spelling in the formula *bi-l-maʿrūf* at 9:71; while the more usual form with *alif* is employed for the same formula at 9:112. An identical observation could be made regarding Kairouan R119 for *bi-l-qisṭ*, written without *alif* in 10:47 and 10:54, but with *alif* in 11:85.
- The term *ʾilāh* includes sometimes a *ya'* in place of the medial *alif* (one example in 9:129 found in Paris, BnF Arabe 330g and Qāf 47).

- The word *zakāt* is written with *alif* at 9:5 and 9:11 in Paris, BnF Arabe 330g; while it is correctly written with *waw* in 9:18 and 9:71.
- The change of consonants mentioned for the word *rijza*, written *rijsa* with *sin* instead of *zay* in the Codex A.1 (8:11) appears in three other manuscripts related to the LH/A-A groups (Paris, BnF Arabe 330g; Qāf 47 and Kairouan R119) but also in a B.I manuscript (Paris, BnF Arabe 331).

The flexibility and freedom often alleged in studies of the earliest Qurʾanic manuscripts may be only apparent.[38] Some rules hide behind the orthographical variations and show that the Qurʾanic transmission was already controlled during the first half of the eighth century. It is possible that the Islamic narratives about the Umayyad reform by the governor of Basra, ʿUbayd Allah b. Ziyad (d. AH 67/686 CE),[39] may have played a role. However, we know nothing further about the exact instructions of that reform. As Régis Blachère noted, it is strange that this reform did not reach the whole text.[40] Thus, we could envision the orthographic duality in the manuscripts as a disagreement on the words which slipped through the reform, as well as a disagreement precisely on the reformed words. In such cases, the manuscripts could reflect both a pro-Umayyad and anti-Umayyad trends.

In other words, at the beginning of the eighth century, the manuscripts do not display any common orientation towards a unique Qurʾanic archetype. Due to opposition to the Umayyad reform, the archaisms could have been maintained in some local circles as a response to the introduction of the modern orthographies.

Diacritical signs and variant readings

The majority of the different readings of letters observed in the Codex A.1, such as *tha* instead of *ta*, are not attested in other manuscripts and, thus, should be envisaged as unintentional transpositions or improper use of the diacritical system assigned to the copyist. This kind of mistake appears here and there in the Qurʾanic manuscripts of the first two Islamic centuries, without reference to a particular reading's tradition. However, the numerous changes in dotting the verbal prefixes noticed in the Codex A.1 could well characterise the tradition of a specific reading.

Unfortunately, the comparison of this kind of variation is very restricted: only eight occurrences using dots in a different way from that of the Uthmanic Vulgate are shared by our manuscripts and the LH/A group. Half of them agree on the way of dotting the prefix: always *ta* instead of *ya* (see Table 21.10). None of them are known as a traditional Qurʾanic Reading.

These correspondences reflect a general tendency already observed in other manuscripts, datable from the eighth century.[41] During this time, the undotted verbal prefixes could be problematic for some copyists and, presumably, for some readers. Then, many of them received diacritical dots, mainly referring to the letter *ta*, whatever the grammatical context.

A second category of variation in diacritics involves the established diacritical system itself. The comparison reveals that most of the unique ways of dotting observed in the Codex A.1 are due to improper uses that can be assigned to the copyist himself.[42] There are a few correspondences both in the LH/A-A groups and in other manuscripts from the eighth century.

Table 21.10 Variant readings involving diacritics.

Sura, verse	*Term*	*Manuscript's variant*	*Manuscript*
8:47	*yaʿmalūna*	*taʿmalūna*	Codex A.1 Paris, BNF Arabe 330g Qāf 47, before correction
9:35	*yuḥmā*	*tuḥmā*	Codex A.1 Paris, BNF Arabe 330g
10:26	*yarhaqu*	*tarhaqu*	Codex A.1 Paris, BNF Arabe 330g Paris, BNF Arabe 330e (A script) Cairo, Museum of Islamic Art, n.24145 (A/C.I script) Berlin, SBB, We.1913 (B.I script)
11:87	*nasha'u*	*tasha'u*	Codex A.1 Kairouan R119 Paris, BNF Arabe 328c (LH)

Lam-alif

This specific use of dots in association with the *lam-alif* appears in one A manuscript (Paris, BnF Arabe 330f, see Figure 21.8).[43] We identified it in this manuscript almost 11 times for similar words (negation *la*, article *al-* combined with initial *alif*, exception *illā*). Further investigations are still necessary concerning the dotted *lam-alif* and the function of its dots.

Fa and qaf

The specific dotting of *qaf* (with a dot above) and *fa* (with a dot below) could reflect a regional and temporary tradition, mostly related to the LH/A and A groups. Enlarging the scope of our investigations to papyri and inscriptions, this specific way of dotting these letters was apparently employed simultaneously with a second one, which reverses the rules, during the first half of the eighth century in both religious and administrative milieux. This latter way ultimately prevailed in the mainstream written tradition. However, it failed to displace the first one completely, which is still the recognised system today in the Maghrib region.[44]

Textual division

The verse marker constitutes an essential tool within written transmission. Indeed, it is already visible in the most ancient Qurʾanic manuscripts. It is always written in the same black ink as the consonants; thus, it may have had the same sacred quality, and differ in this respect from the other additions, such as vocalisation or titles, usually added in red ink. However, it shows much greater variation than the consonantal

Figure 21.8 Dotted lam-alif. Paris, BnF Arabe 330f, fo.43a. Permission of Bibliothèque nationale de France.

Table 21.11 Common variations of the verse markers with their potential function.

Sura, verse	*Separation after:*	*Manuscript*	*Hypothetical function*
8:34	*Al-muttaqūna*	Codex A.1 Qāf 47 Kairouan R119	*Isolation of a type-formula*
8:42	*Maf'ūlan*	Codex A.1 Qāf 47 Paris, BNF Arabe 330g Kairouan R119 London, BL, Or.2165 Cambridge, Add. 1125	*Semantic stop in the speech (also known by the Tradition, as Basran, Syrian and Hijazi separation)*
8:44	*Maf'ūlan*	Codex A.1	*Semantic stop in the speech, copy of the 8:42*
9:61	*li-l-mu'minīna*	Qāf 47 Codex A.1 Paris, BNF Arabe 330g Paris, BNF Arabe 330f (A)	*Semantic stop in the speech*
9:115	*Yattaqūna*	Codex A.1 Paris, BNF Arabe 330f (A)	*Isolation of a type-formula; Recitation tool (waqf' location)*
10:5	*Ḥisāb*	Codex A.1 Qāf 47 Paris, BNF Arabe 330g	*Recitation tool (waqf' location and key word, usually used in ending verse)*

skeleton. This variation indicates flexibility in the textual units and their delimitation at least until the end of the eighth century and so should be considered as substantial information about Qur'anic transmission.

In Codex A.1 there are additional verse divisions, most of which are apparently peculiar to the copyist of the Codex A.1. Other manuscripts of the LH/A group also

have their own verse divisions. A few separations found in the Codex A.1 are also found in the LH/A and A manuscripts, and sometimes in other manuscripts. Qāf 47 introduces several separations, often placed in the location of the *waqf*, as in the Codex A.1 (see Table 21.11).

Despite the distinct traditions in their placement, the positioning of these verse markers may have satisfied similar needs. Flexibility in their use appears to have been confined by some specific criteria. These appear to have had to do mainly with orality and recitation, placing the verses markers in line with internal rhymes and optional pauses. Most of these separations were added freely by the copyists; but some others were circulating as part of the Qurʾan's transmission. Among these separations, very few have survived in the later tradition. Many issues are still waiting investigation regarding the concept of verse during the first stages of the Qurʾanic transmission. In particular, further investigation could clarify the relationships between the oral and written in the late antique Arabic world.

CONCLUSIONS

Codex A.1 should be considered an Umayyad-era production. Like the LH/A family, it reflects transitional features reminding us of both the earliest manuscripts in Hijazi script and those in A script. A more precise identification remains hypothetical: Codex A.1 could be a regional manuscript, most likely from Palestine or Egypt, written by a copyist familiar with the LH/A script, who based his copy on a model written in the type A script. It is perhaps no coincidence that many of these manuscripts have been discovered in Egypt. A local tradition of copying the Qurʾan might have emerged there in very early times.

The present study emphasises the existence of multiple trends in the transmission of the Qurʾan during Umayyad times. In particular, it provides further evidence against the concept of a unique transmission from a Qurʾanic archetype. During the first decades of the eighth century, the parameters of the transmission were not yet fixed, and retained the possibility of individual expression by those who were responsible for copying it. Hence, Qurʾanic orthography could be linked to political claims, and, thus, was used as a way of showing allegiance to particular factions. In the same way, the extensive use of *matres lectionis*, diacritical signs and markers of verses clearly reflects a sudden interest in the verbal recitation of the Qurʾan, and the incursion of the *qurraʾ* (or 'Readers') into the written transmission. (The *qurraʾ* are the authoritative figures who played a major role in the Qurʾan transmission according to the Islamic tradition.) Unlike the earliest manuscripts, in which the Qurʾanic text is confined to a very ambiguous consonantal skeleton, Codex A.1 and its related manuscripts introduce new textual elements for a concrete performance of the Qurʾanic reading. The Qurʾan, then, is not an immutable text; it rather provides a space wherein several trends in its arrangement are in constant confrontation. Identifying these trends is a very complex task and requires us to consider both political and social claims.

The foregoing analysis raises many further substantial issues related to the identification of these trends. Do some trends reflect efforts to preserve the archaic heritage, while others are responses to the new expectations of the Muslim community? Do the different copyists' initiatives conceal a cleavage between pro- and anti-Umayyad

tendencies? Does the complex relationship between orality and writing have an impact on the writing of the Qurʾan? These substantial issues still remain to be further explored in future studies of the Qurʾanic manuscripts.

NOTES

1 I would like to express my warmest thanks to Fred Donner for his corrections, suggestions and comments. I am however responsible for any mistakes which have remained in the text.
2 See, for example Déroche 2009, Dutton 2017. Studying the variants readings of the Birmingham MS Mingana Arab. (Isl) 1572, Yasin Dutton rightly assigns the fluidity found in the early manuscripts to a 'so-called period of ikhtiyar which seems to have preceded the final standardization of the Seven, Eight, Ten Readings, *etc.*' p. 27.
3 According to al-Nadim (d. 995 or 998), the caliph ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAziz (r. 717–20) would have ordered a manuscript to a mosaic's craftsman but refused to pay the outrageous price requested by the copyist (al-Nadim 1872: 6). Elsewhere, the caliph's brother, Abu Bakr, would have purchased his father's manuscript for thousand dinars (Ibn Duqmaq 1310/1893: 73).
4 See Jeffery 1937.
5 See al-Sijistani 2004.
6 Excluding the Ṣanʿaʾ palimpsest (Ṣan'ā' DAM 01-27.1) which is very similar to the other manuscripts on the formal level, but distinct on the textual one.
7 The earliest ones, in Hijazi script, as the Codex Parisino-petropolitanus or the British Library Or. 2165 are equivalent to in-quarto. Later examples, written in elaborate styles, show a progressive growth in the size of the Qurʾanic manuscripts: the Ṣanʿaʾ codex attributed to the reign of al-Walid I (Ṣanʿaʾ DAM 20-33.1) corresponds to an in-folio, and the 'Umayyad fragment', studied by Y. Dutton, reaches the dimensions of in-plano (Dutton 2007).
8 A complete study of this manuscript will be envisaged within the project Coranica.
9 Cellard 2018.
10 For a description of the Hijazi style, see Déroche 2014.
11 George 2010: 92.
12 See Déroche 2009 and George 2010.
13 David 2011, lot no. 152.
14 The rule is so named after Caspar René Gregory (1846–1917), who is credited to be the first to notice the consistent practice of collating parchment leaves in medieval codices (Avrin 2010).
15 al-Sijistani 2004: 40.
16 Spitaler 1935.
17 Except in R.I between the *suras* 43 and 46, where there is no separation. This may reflect the work of another copyist.
18 This type-formula could be defined as a 'short textual unit which in all cases … can be defined as a very general enunciation ending with a word rhyming with the neighbouring verses' (Déroche 2014: 28).
19 Déroche 1983.
20 Paris, BnF Arabe 330d, 330e, 330f.
21 Paris, BnF Arabe 326b, San-Petersburg, NLR, Marcel 10.
22 One of the fragments belonging to this group is classified as Hijazi type II – as the BL, Or.2165on the Corpus Coranicum website.
23 Déroche 1983: 145.
24 This analysis has been undertaken by the project Coranica, see Corpus Coranicum 2016.

25 This fragment is today kept in Cairo, Dar al-kutub (masahif 247). The present study of this manuscript is based on the images from the Bergsträsser-Archiv, in which the manuscript is called Qaf 47 (available on www.corpuscoranicum.de).
26 Cellard 2015.
27 Many similar fragments from the Damascus deposit have been identified in the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Art in Istanbul.
28 Dodge 1970: 12.
29 Debié 2010.
30 George 2010.
31 Paris, BnF Arabe 330f combines bifolios sometimes thick and sometimes thin.
32 See for example Paris, BnF Arabe 334a, 334b and 334c, 337a.
33 Controversies about the physical presentation of the codex (use of ornaments or size of the codices) and its orthography could reflect these different trends of producing manuscripts, see Sijistani 2004.
34 According to C. Robin, the letter *alif* wasn't employed for the long /a/ in pre-islamic Arabic spelling. The system of the *matres lectionis* was probably reformed in Medina, during the first decades after the Muhammad's death (Robin 2006).
35 Photographed by Gotthelf-Bergsträsser from the private Library of the Sherif ʿAbdarraḥman ibn Zidan.
36 This table has been elaborated in part with the data of the Corpus Coranicum website (www.corpuscoranicum.de).
37 Here, the Codex A.1 includes the *alif* while the Paris BnF Arabe 330g does not.
38 Déroche 2009; Small 2011.
39 Al-Sijistani 2004: 117.
40 Blachère 2002: 94.
41 About the C.I manuscripts, see Cellard 2015. A same conclusion has been proposed in Fedeli 2012.
42 However, this kind of deviation appears also in the LH/A group. In many instances, two manuscripts (Paris, BnF Arabe 330 g and Qāf 47) use four dashes for dotting the *shin*.
43 The dotted *lam-alif* appears in sura 9, verses: 74, 99, 106, 107,110, 114, 118. Another dotted *lam-alif* is on the folio 1b, sold in Rennes (number 153), belonging also to the Paris, BnF Arabe 330f.
44 Kaplony 2008; Leemhuis 2006; Small 2013.

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CHAPTER TWENTY TWO

CHRISTIAN ART AND VISUAL CULTURE IN UMAYYAD BILAD AL-SHAM

Basema Hamarneh

INTRODUCTION

By the time of the coming of Islam, churches were the most prominent, if not the sole, public buildings, especially in Syria and Mesopotamia.[1] Ecclesiastical buildings represented an essential tool of communication and transmission of identity, and constituted important landmarks in urban and rural centres. Their maintenance and decoration reflected the convictions, social status and prestige of the local population and so could not be ignored by the new political powers. The continuity of Christian artistic and visual traditions is well documented in the period of transition from Byzantine to Umayyad political rule in the Levant. It is richly illustrated by material culture, in particular the construction and decoration of churches.

Indeed, under the Umayyads, some Levantine Christian communities appear to have flourished as subjects of the 'Commander of the Believers' (*amir al-muʾminin*), at least during the seventh century. This early concept of 'Believers', as it is interpreted by Borrut and Donner, was significant: it probably meant that the Umayyads considered Christians and other monotheists to be fellow members of the faithful, and so incorporated them into the government more or less as equal partners,[2] thus allowing the development of independent religious and artistic identities. The Greek inscription of Hammet Gader, which attests the restoration of the hot water system in 662, might reflect this ideal, with Muʿawiya mentioned as *amir al-muʾminin* in a Greek inscription alongside a Christian cross.[3] It is not possible at this stage to determine exactly when the concept of the new state shifted to become solely associated with Muslims, distinct from the other monotheists (Christians and Jews).[4] However, non-Muslim settlements underwent a significant change in the first decades of the Abbasid rule, with a major decline in the number of inhabitants, their economy and fortunes,[5] thus putting an end in some areas, to an extraordinary artistic tradition.

In what follows, some of the literary evidence for interactions between caliphs and their Christian subjects is surveyed, before turning to the material evidence for Christian building work in Umayyad and early Abbasid Greater Syria (*Bilad al-Sham*). Particular attention is paid to the common decorative schemes of the seventh

and early-to-mid eighth centuries, and the problem of *iconophobia* – deliberate damage to figurative imagery in many eighth-century churches.

ATTITUDES TO CHRISTIAN BUILDINGS IN THE LITERARY SOURCES

Abbasid-era literature refers to the attitude of the Umayyads towards buildings of Christian worship. For instance, according to the Syriac Passion of Peter of Capitolias (Beit Ras), Caliph al-Walid I (r. 705–15) is said to have had a residence at Dayr Murran, the former monastery of St Theodore.[6] It was a luxuriously decorated residence in the foothills of Jabal Qaysiun overlooking the Ghuta of Damascus that was also a favourite retreat of other Umayyad caliphs and notables, and later of the Abbasids. Al-Walid I himself is said to have died there.[7] While the death scene may perhaps have originated as anti-Umayyad propaganda,[8] there is ample evidence that the Abbasid elite continued the tradition of visits to churches and monasteries contributes to confirming similar reports concerning the Umayyads.

Abbasid-era elite interest in churches is expressed in several accounts. The poet al-Nawasi (762–813) attests to his devotion to 'an image of a Lady in an apse',[9] while his contemporary, Abu al-Nasr al-Basri, describes the beauty of a painting in the Church of St Sergius near Baghdad that seemed to him 'as perfect as if it was created by God himself'.[10] In *Kitab Adab al-ghuraba'*, attributed to al-Isfahani, and dated to the tenth century, the author in a passing remark mentions that when he was a boy in Syria he: 'went into a Christian church to see things in it that I heard praised'.[11] Similar motivation was at the heart of the visit reportedly made by the Abbasid caliph al-Mutawakkil (r. 847–61) in the region of Homs. It is related that the Caliph walked around and explored monks' churches and monasteries: 'looking at their marvellous pictures and splendid accessories and seeing the young monks and daughters of priests with faces like moons on branches strut about in porticoes and courtyards'.[12] This direct knowledge and visual contact with the local Byzantine heritage exercised a certain fascination and led to the use of Christian themes in a secular Islamic context, such as the depictions of Prophet Jonah in the late Umayyad Qusayr ʿAmra in Jordan,[13] or the mention of a wall painting adorning al-Mukhtar's Abbasid residence at Samarra, capital of the caliphate from 836–92, on which were depicted lamps illuminating a church during a night service.[14]

The approach of the Muslim ruling class towards buildings of worship, however, had to be regulated from a very early stage, in negotiation with their Christian subjects.[15] Although the main concern of the first treaties was the negotiation of the submission of a city and the establishment of the capitation tax for the conquered communities, they also provided a guarantee of the preservation of private and religious properties. While it no doubt reflects later practices to a significant extent, the Pact attributed to ʿUmar (634–44), offers important insights, since it addresses the most important issues of taxes, property, building and the permission to restore churches. It even touches upon private matters, such as religious rituals, behaviour and dress codes. The themes oscillate between duties and rights, but also show how and to what extent the members of non-Muslim communities were integrated into the new political context.[16]

Brief mentions in various Islamic sources also provide insights into the architecture and decoration of Christian churches, with more emphasis given to the buildings most venerated by the local communities. Examples include the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, St George in Lydda,[17] St Sergius in Rusafa,[18] St Helen in Aleppo,[19] St Cassianus in Antioch,[20] St John in Hims,[21] and, after 705, Holy Mary in Damascus,[22] to mention a few. The beauty of the Byzantine foundations in Islamic territories, captured the eye of travellers and geographers. Al-Muqaddasi al-Bushari mentions the mosaics of the church in Edessa/Urfa, considered to be one of the world's wonders, in his *Ahsan al-taqasim fi maʿrifat al-aqalim*;[23] similar attention to detail is provided by Ibn Khurradadhbih in his *Kitab al-Masalik wa-l-mamalik* where he mentions the marble decorations of St Cassianus of Antioch and those of the church in Hierapolis, finely adorned with jujuba wood (*Ziziphus jujuba*, Ar. *khashab al-ʿunnab*).[24]

The attitude of the Umayyad rulers is also worth mentioning. In about 660, when Muʿawiya received the allegiance of the city of Jerusalem, thus confirming his position as Caliph, he visited some of the most venerated Christian shrines, such as the Gethsemane Church and the Sepulchre of Mary, where he prayed. He then stopped on Mount Golgotha. It is also said that he visited the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and the Church of the Ascension.[25] At that time, the Holy City had an imposing monumental Christian aspect, and Muslims did not seek the destruction of its religious buildings.[26] The Jerusalem native al-Muqaddasi, who wrote in the tenth century, claimed that ʿAbd al-Malik ibn Marwan (r. 685–705) erected the Dome of the Rock because he feared that the Christian architecture in Jerusalem would distract the Muslims.[27] Thus, the splendour of the Dome of the Rock, once constructed, was meant to divert attention from the Holy Sepulchre, or clearly offer an equally visible topographical landmark in the landscape of the *Hagia Polis* (Gk. 'Holy City').

THE MATERIAL EVIDENCE

In general, the material evidence from Greater Syria (*Bilad al-Sham*) for the continuity of ecclesiastical building in the seventh and eighth centuries is mostly provided by excavations in rural contexts. This may in part be considered the result of the 'ruralisation' of Byzantine provincial society under Justinian and into the seventh century with less church building projects in cities. However, the significant number of rural churches and monasteries which were constructed or renovated in the early Islamic period, was probably also because in these areas Umayyad administration did not hinder building projects. The intention was to maintain control over Christian rural areas, and not to reduce their taxable revenues. Muslim communities and the military elite preferred cities and the newly established military towns (*misr*, plural *amsar*), while Christians continued to dwell in smaller towns and in the countryside.[28] Furthermore, the geographical prominence of the former Byzantine provinces of *Arabia* and three *Palaestinae* at the heart of the Umayyad state, enabled them to receive government attention in the paving of roads, the fortification of the coastal cities,[29] the development of agriculture, as well as for building projects in cities, as evidenced notably by the monumental mosaic inscription at Beth Shean,[30] and on and around the Temple Mount in Jerusalem.

In *Arabia* and the three *Palaestinae* mosaic inscriptions attest to the involvement of church officials and of the lay members of communities in the renovation and decoration of churches.[31] Members of the regular clergy and of the monastic hierarchy (bishops, priests, deacons and monks) are mentioned in them,[32] and so the inscriptions also enable tracing the activity of local bishops, and assessing their permanence in office, as well as the extent of their power over their dioceses. These Greek texts suggest a drastic a drop in Christian public building activities in cities, and the shift of new projects to villages.[33] Christian artisans and craftsmen continued not only to pave floors in mosaic, but also to produce pottery, as indicated by the pottery kilns in Gerasa/Jerash which produced oil lamps, of which some were even decorated with crosses and the names of the artisans.[34]

The seventh-century mosaic inscriptions that coincide with the years just before and after the battle of Yarmuk (636) indicate a *floruit* of ecclesiastical foundations probably built with the consent of the new Muslim authorities as a measure of goodwill towards a local Christian population that showed no overt hostility towards its new rulers. Under Archbishop Theodore of Bostra, in the village of Rihab, the Church of the Prophet Isaiah was built in 634/5,[35] and in that same year the Church of St Menas.[36] At Khirbat al-Samra, also under the jurisdiction of Bostra, two churches were constructed, the Church of St George in 637[37] and the Church of John the Baptist in 639.[38] That same year a pavement was added by Bishop George to a church in Shivta in *Palaestina Tertia*.[39]

In general, the pavements of the churches mentioned above do not follow a single decorative program: in the Church of St Menas a rich, solely geometric, pattern is displayed, while in the other churches figurative images are inserted into a predominantly abstract *schema* of geometric motifs. Iconography continued to draw inspiration from the Byzantine repertoire of which benefactors and genre scenes were a constantly repeated component. Mosaics provided colourful and rich depictions of daily life in the countryside with scenes of agriculture, pastoralism, animal hunts and chase all set within neutral vegetal or geometric decorative motifs.[40]

On the mosaic floor of the Church of St John the Baptist in Khirbat al-Samra, human and animal figures, now lost, set within stylised plant branches and closed flower buds, originally filled parallel registers. At the western ends of the main nave, two large walled cities were depicted on either side of a standing figure, now lost.[41] The two cities include buildings and domed structures topped by crosses, as if to represent churches (Figure 22.1). On the lower register an amphora on a high pedestal was flanked by two animals, also destroyed. In the eastern part of the nave, a large circular medallion, framed by a dedicatory inscription may have contained a mythological scene, according to Piccirillo.[42]

At least 11 churches bear witness to important building projects in the Umayyad period. They may be divided into two major groups. The first group is represented by churches dated to the second half of the seventh century, mainly to the reign of Muʿawiya (661–80) and to the early part of the reign of ʿAbd al-Malik (r. 685–705). This is the case of twinned churches in the village of Rihab. A Greek inscription states that the first church was dedicated to Martyr Phylemos in 663,[43] and that the second church was added 28 years later and dedicated to St Sergius (691).[44] In Salkhad in the Southern Hauran in 665, a room was added to the local church.[45] In the diocese of Philadelphia/Amman in the village of Khilda, the floor of the double nave of the

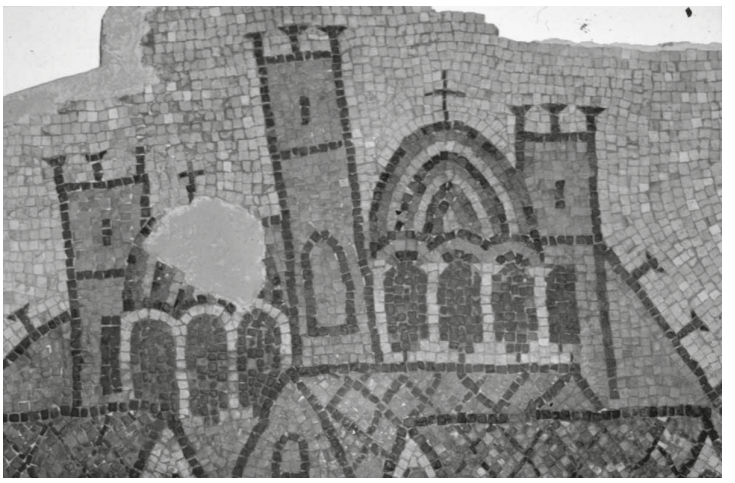

Figure 22.1 St John the Baptist at Khirbat al-Samra, detail of the nave mosaic. Courtesy of Studium Biblicum Franciscanum.

Church of St Varus was renovated and completed according to the dedicatory inscription, in replacement of an earlier pavement,[46] at the time of Bishop George (687).[47] In 691, a mosaic pavement was added to the main nave of the Church of Saint Lot at Deir ʿAyn ʿAbata (Zoara). Belonging to the same period is the stone inscription relating to an addition or a renovation which took place in an ecclesiastical context in the year 687 at Areopolis/Rabbat Moab.[48]

The best-preserved examples of this first group, the Khilda Church and the Church of St Lot, allow us to put forward some general considerations on the iconography and the stylistic layout of the mosaics. The pavement of the Church of St Varus in Khilda depicts in the sacred area vine scrolls springing from a *kantharos* (Gk. 'drinking cup') flanked by two gazelles. The nave mosaic unfurls within four main horizontal panels, in which the figurative elements appear aligned on a predominantly white background as in the Church of St John the Baptist at Khirbat al-Samra. The first register with the dedicatory inscription is followed by two peacocks facing a *kantharos*. The focus of the following panel is a central medallion with a standing female figure with her hands raised in prayer (Lat. *orans*), holding flowers, and identified by the inscription as the personification of Gê, the Earth.[49] On either side of the medallion two trees are depicted. In the third register a lion and a bull flank a palm tree, the branches of which spring from the trunk, with a symmetrically placed pair of birds facing it. On the lower register two gazelles depicted on either side of a tree and two pairs of birds near a plant are associated with a Greek inscription.[50]

In the nave of the church of St Lot at Zoara (691/2) the decoration bears witness to significant works on the part of mosaicists. Careful scrutiny leads to the conclusion that the general layout of vine scrolls winding around a large central cross topped by a chalice. Inside each scroll pairs of peacocks, sheep and birds face each other.[51] Although the mosaic formally follows the Byzantine traditional motif of 'inhabited'

vine scrolls, minimum accuracy characterises the rendering of the anatomic features of the animals and a sober and limited chromatic range of the mosaic tesserae is used.

The second group belongs to the first half of the eighth century. In this group, continuity in the decoration or renovation of Christian buildings of worship is attested, although it is not always clear if the mosaics were set in churches built *ex novo* or if they simply covered over or replaced previous pavements.

In the former *Provincia Arabia*, five cases are dated by inscriptions: at Quweismeh (717/18),[52] the church on the acropolis at Maʿin (719/20),[53] the first church of Khirbat al-Badiyya (710) in area A;[54] the monastery of Rihab built after the year 720, and the church in the southern part of the town (*c.* 736);[55] as well as the Church of Saint Stephen (718) at Umm al-Rasas at the time of Bishop Job (Figure 22.2).[56]

At least three of the aforementioned churches display topographic vignettes, showing cities surrounded by walls, each in turn depicted buildings of various shapes, probably in reference to real or invented monuments. The variety of toponyms certainly played an important role in emphasising local identities within a wider regional framework, and in stressing the prominence of local Christian communities and their prosperity under Umayyad rule.[57] Local Christian identities may also be deduced from the use of local eras and in few cases of the era of creation for dating purposes in mosaic inscriptions.

In the church on the acropolis of Maʿin dated to 719/20, the cities of Nicopolis, Eleutheropolis, Ascalon, Maiumas, Gaza, Odroa, Charach Muba, Aeropolis, Gadaron and Esbounta are represented. On the mosaic floor of the Church of St Stephen at Umm al-Rasas (in the diocese of Madaba) dated to 718, with a second phase in 756, a continuous frieze around the central nave makes full use of topographic representation. In a first border are depicted the cities of the

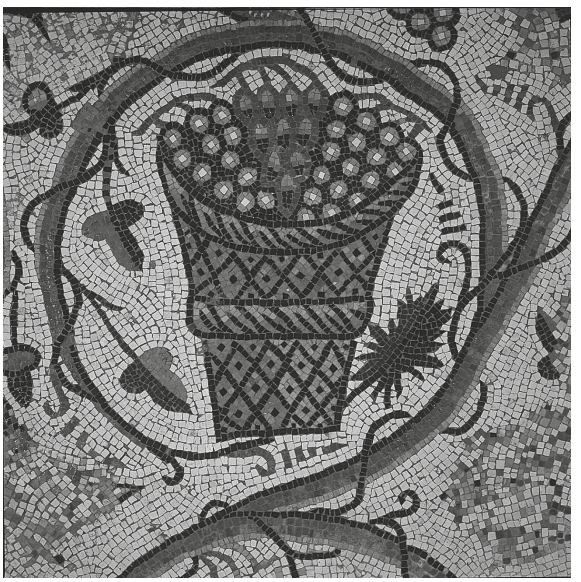

Figure 22.2 St Stephen Umm al-Rasas, basket with grapes, detail of the nave pavement. Courtesy of Studium Biblicum Franciscanum.

Nile delta: Pelusio, Panaou, Damietta, Antinaou, Herakleopolis, Pseudostomon, Kynopolis, Alexandria, Kasion, Thenesos (Figure 22.3). In the space between the pillars on the south are the cities East of the River Jordan with Kastron Mefaa identified with Umm al-Rasas, Philadelphia/Amman, Madaba, Esbounta/Esbus/Hisban, Belemounta/Maʿin, Aeropolis/Rabbath Moba, Charach Moba, while the northern frieze is devoted to the cities of *Palaestina*, starting with the Holy City – Jerusalem, Neapolis, Sebastia/Samaria, Kesaria/Caesarea, Dispolis/Lodd, Eleutheropolis/Beith Jibrin, Ascalon and Gaza (Figures 22.4 and 22.5). In the side aisles, large squares are decorated with the images of some donors from other places in the same diocese: Limbon (Libb), Deblaton (Beit Deblatim) and Fisga (Mount Nebo).

In the former provinces of *Palaestina Prima*, *Secunda* and *Tertia* epigraphic evidence points to a similar chronological development, although it is noticeable that the use of the system of local eras prevailed under the Umayyads, an unusual case is that of the church at Tamra in Eastern Galilee, the Greek inscription of which bears a *Hijra* date equivalent to 725 CE.[58] In the hinterland of the city of Jerusalem, several inscriptions of Christian buildings are dated to the Umayyad period. Such as a chapel in Ramot built at the time of Theodore, Patriarch of Jerusalem in 6254, which corresponds to 752 according to the Alexandrian era of Creation,[59] and the Funerary Chapel at Beit Safafa, possibly from 701 according to the Georgian era of Creation.[60] In the southern Judean Hills two inscriptions, dated to 682 and 725, were found in the monastic church south of Horvath Yattir.[61] The building of the church at Khirbet Aristobulia in 700/1 should also be noted.[62] The last in this series of inscriptions is the church complex at Jabaliyah and dated to 732 according to the era of Gaza.[63]

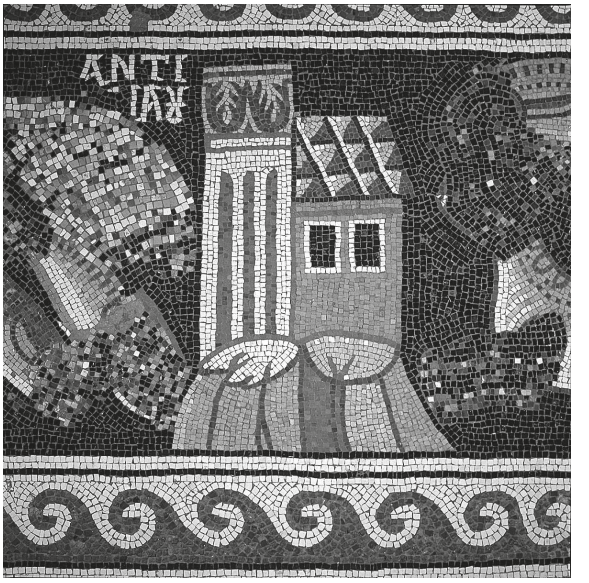

Figure 22.3 Antinaou detail of the Nilotic frieze of St Stephen at Umm al-Rasas. Courtesy of Studium Biblicum Franciscanum.

Figure 22.4 Caesarea detail from the North topographic frieze of St Stephen at Umm al-Rasas. Courtesy of Studium Biblicum Franciscanum.

Figure 22.5 Ascalon detail from the North topographic frieze of St Stephen at Umm al-Rasas. Courtesy of Studium Biblicum Franciscanum.

The building of churches in the Hauran under the Umayyads is indicated by the lintel (dated to 641) of Deir Ayyub monastery; that of the *martyrium* of St George (dated to 652) at Kafr, to which an atrium was added in 665/6; and the church at Salkhad-Triacome, built in 633/4.[64]

The mosaic pavements examined so far show several common technical and stylistic features. They all express preference for interlace motifs of the geometric répertoire that would become one of the characteristics of Islamic art; they also show distinctly a *horror vacui* with the addition of subsidiary decorative elements, such as the flowers and squares filling the resulting empty spaces. In terms of technique, they are made of badly cut *tesserae*, this often leading to the irregularity of lines, the choice of colours for *tesserae* is rather homogeneous, with a preference for muted tones probably due to reliance on local stone quarries.

There is a marked hiatus in the dateable evidence for works on churches in *Bilad al-Sham* during the crisis of the 740s, but works resume shortly after the downfall of the Umayyad dynasty, albeit limited to renovations. At Umm al-Rasas (Kastron Mefaa), a second, geometric pavement, with a Greek inscription, was added to the presbyterium in 756, under Bishop Job, covering a previous floor (Figure 22.6).[65] The same bishop is mentioned in 762/3 on a new mosaic in the monastic Chapel of the Theotokos at ʿAyn al-Kanisah, to the south west of Mt Nebo.[66] The mosaic pavement of the Church of the Theotokos was completed in 766/7 in Madaba thanks to the financial support of the local citizens at the time of Bishop Theophanes.[67] A small mosaic pavement which decorated a room adjacent to the monastery of Mar Elias near Ajlun was paid for by a local pulse merchant and his wife in 775/6.[68] In the second half of the eighth century the church of Shunah al-Janubiyah in the bishopric of Livias (*Palaestina Prima*)[69] was restored and decorated with a mosaic pavement exhibiting predominantly geometric patterns and a few ducks, surrounding the dedicatory inscription in the main nave. Both the design and execution, however, are crude.[70] The Church of the Monastery of Euthymius at Khan al-Ahmar may be ascribed to the same period, its pavement exhibiting interlocking stripes and sophisticated geometric patterns, although its colour range and its technical execution are poor.[71] The last proof of work carried out in a church in this period is provided by the inscription associated with the renovation of the pavement in the Church of St Nicephorus Constantine in 832 at Rihab.[72]

ICONOPHOBIA

A major interpretive problem is the phenomenon of the obliteration of images or the *iconophobia* that is detectible in many religious buildings.[73] This is manifested in partial or total systematic damage aimed at rendering illegible the images of living creatures (humans and animals) by depriving them of some or all of their distinctive features, such as heads, or limbs. This damage is found not only on mosaic pavements but also on liturgical furnishings.[74] In some cases, the destruction was conducted with great precision, by removing the original *tesserae* and filling the gaps with the same mosaic cubes but in random order so as to restore an apparent integrity of the carpet while depriving it of the figures. Some examples have replacement motifs such as diamonds, leaves and florets. The care that characterises this phenomenon points to Christians as the perpetrators of such acts;[75] but the reason for such action continues to be widely

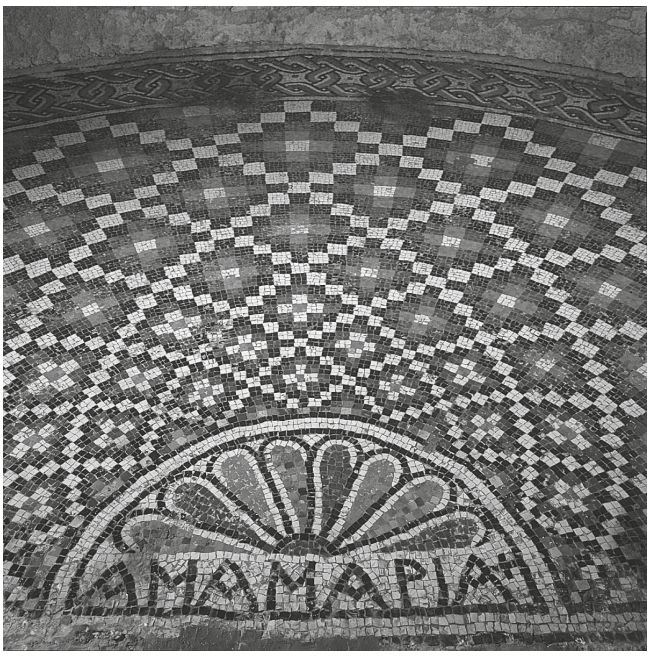

Figure 22.6 Detail of the new mosaic of the presbyterium of St Stephen at Umm al-Rasas. Courtesy of Studium Biblicum Franciscanum.

discussed,[76] not least since such iconophobia is not only recorded in churches but has also been observed in the mosaic pavements of the synagogues of the region.[77]

Although this phenomenon affected one-third of the buildings discovered so far, it does not seem possible to establish the criteria that determined the choice of images to be destroyed. In the church of the Lions at Umm al-Rasas some images were completely removed, their *tesserae* having been re-inserted randomly in the gaps, thus allowing only the outlines of the figures to be visible (Figures 22.7 and 22.8), while in the presbytery of the same church two lions (Figure 22.9), one of two gazelles and birds remained untouched. In the Church of Bishop Sergius also at Umm al-Rasas, the presbytery remained intact while wide-ranging iconophobia was directed at the central nave. The sacred area was probably barely visible from the nave (Figure 22.10), since the raised chancel screens and columns marked a clear separation between the two adjacent areas of the church. It is also possible that some destructions were carried out in haste and lacked systematic meticulousness, thus leaving some portions of the floor intact. This observation might support the hypothesis of lack of control over the execution of these operations and does not simplify the task of understanding how the phenomenon evolved and how was it perceived by both Christians and Muslims. In many cases neutral images (floral or geometric designs) were inserted into the gaps, as in the church of St Stephen at Umm al-Rasas.[78] Such substitutive decoration, which is also found in the monastery of ʿAyn al-Kanisah and in the church on the Acropolis of Maʿin and in other churches, underlines the desire to return to the floor its own decorative and functional integrity by adding neutral and therefore 'ideologically' acceptable images.

Figure 22.7 Floor mosaic decoration of the lateral apse of the Lions Church at Umm al-Rasas. Courtesy of Studium Biblicum Franciscanum.

Figure 22.8 Pheasant facing a kantharos, detail of the floor mosaic of the lateral apse of the Lions Church at Umm al-Rasas. Courtesy of Studium Biblicum Franciscanum.

Figure 22.9 Lion head, detail from the presbytery of the Lions Church at Umm al-Rasas. Courtesy of Studium Biblicum Franciscanum.

Figure 22.10 View of the presbyterium of St Stephen Umm al-Rasas. Courtesy of the Studium Biblicum Franciscanum.

It is important to point out that the mosaic pavements laid in the Umayyad period, such as the mosaic floor of the lower church of Quweismeh dated 719/20,[79] and the contemporary one of the church on the Acropolis of Maʿin,[80] as well as the first mosaic floor of the Church of St Stephen of Umm al-Rasas (dated 718), all originally displayed living creatures (humans and animals). Subsequent interventions such as the new floor dated 756 in the presbyterium area of the Church of St Stephen at Umm al-Rasas, which covered a previous floor, may indicate that the iconophobic 'movement' developed around or before of that date. At the Theotokos monastery of ʿAyn al-Kanisah, which was restored in 762,[81] some images were inserted, while others were obliterated, without any logical explanation for this phenomenon. A little later, the mosaic of the Church of the Theotokos built in Madaba in 767,[82] which probably replaced a previous figurative pavement, combined exclusively geometric patterns, completely eschewing figurative representations.

CONCLUSIONS

The rich evidence from *Bilad al-Sham* indicates continuous artistic productivity on the part of the Christian communities during the seventh and eighth centuries, gradually diminishing in the first decades of the ninth century. Churches were built and renovated in the early Islamic period, but were probably abandoned before, or during, the early Abbasid period. This is paralleled in Egypt and in Iraq and Iran according to Simpson.[83] It seems likely that this is to be attributed to the inclusive approach of the early rulers of the region to Jews and Christians as fellow monotheists; the precise process by which this attitude shifted has yet to be fully understood. On the basis of the archaeological and epigraphic documentation, attention to churches endured under the Umayyads, though the number of new foundations strongly diminished towards the end of their rule. It cannot be excluded that the gradual decline of the economies of local Christian communities led to a drastic drop in the capacity to finance expensive building and decorative projects, of which only very few are documented after 750. These last mosaic pavements, which excluded human beings, and systematically erased parts of the existing figures, showed reliance on geometric ornament which will symbolically mark the end of Late Antiquity, and at the same time become a feature of the new Islamic art.

NOTES

1 Kennedy 1985a, 1985b.
2 It being understood that this was a dynastic rule, in which the highest echelons of power remained in the hands of the Umayyad family (Borrut and Donner 2016: 3).
3 The inscription was written in Greek, with Muʿawiya's title transliterated into Greek letters. Di Segni 1997: 237–40.
4 This was probably also paralleled in the establishing of a distinct Christian Orthodox identity, at a time when the Church itself was in the throes of the Iconoclastic controversy.
5 Walmsley 2000, 312–13.
6 For a translation of the Syriac text, see Shoemaker 2016: 37; Piccirillo 2002: 226.
7 *EI2*, 'Dayr Murran' (D. Sourdel). It is important to point out that ʿUmar b.ʿAbd al-ʿAziz was buried at another Dayr Murran (also, confusingly, known as Dayr Samʿan), near Maʿarrat al-Nuʿman in northern Syria. See Key Fowden 2004: 166.
8 Key Fowden 2004: 166.

9 Sidqi 1957: 50.
10 Sidqi 1957: 49.
11 According to a different version: 'I passed by the church in Edessa on my way to Iraq and, having heard about it, went inside to see it' (al-Isfahani (attributed) 1974: 36–7 and 78).
12 See Creswell 1969: 232–42, 265–70. Also Herzfeld 1927: 8; and Key Fowden 2004: 165.
13 The Story of Jonah is depicted in four episodes in the west aisle of Qusayr ʿAmra. The details suggest that the artist likely followed visual models, not textual ones. See Leal 2017: 237–41. On biblical images in mosaics of Arabia and *Palaestinae* see Hamarneh 2018: 32–5. The personification of the earth is also a common iconographic theme for churches and Umayyad palaces, as at Qasr al-Hayr al-Gharbi. See Schlumberger 1986: pl. 35. This constant interconnection and continuity confirms how the Umayyads were influenced and fascinated by the prosperity of Classicism within its late antique dimension.
14 A palace visitor mentioned that: 'One of [the paintings] was of a church with monks in it, and the best was of the priests who officiated at night.' The short description is followed by the verses: 'We never saw anything like the splendour of al-Mukhtar, nor anything like the painting of the night priest' (al-Isfahani (attributed) 1974: 24–5). Other verses, attributed to al-Isfahani: 'I was sleepless in the monastery of al-Matirun, as if I were guarding the stars that travel at the end of the night. Sirius passed by, looking like churches hung with lamps' (al-Isfahani (attributed) 1974: 9).
15 Tritton 1930: 5–17; Noth 2004: 103–24; Cohen 1999: 100–57; Guidetti 2016: 16–19, n. 25.
16 On the 'Pact of ʿUmar', see Levy-Rubin 2011. Later copies of documents attributed to the era of Muhammad exist such as that at Sinai. See Manaphēs 1990: 374, fig. 18. Written sources provide ambiguous information: on the one hand it is forbidden to build new churches and rebuild any ruined structure which was not in use at the time of the conquest, on the other hand, mention is made of the possibility of restoring ecclesiastical buildings in use in the seventh century when necessary. According of Michael the Syrian the Umayyad Caliph Muʿawiya sponsored the restoration of the Church of St Sophia of Edessa after an earthquake. See the *Chronicle* of Michael the Syrian (Chabot 1963: II, 457); and the *Chronicle* of Theophanes Confessor (Greatrex, Mango and Scott 1997: 497). Subsequently, under the Abbasids, the Cathedral of St Thomas in Amida was restored in 770, as reported in the *Chronicle* of Dyonisius of Tell-Mahré (Chabot 1895: 96). Bar Hebraeus mentions that the Nestorian patriarch Sayd agreed to surrender once he had received the assurance, among other things, of help from the new power in restoring religious buildings (compare Abbeloos and Lamy 1872–7: II, 115–18; Brock 1987: 57; Guidetti 2007: 32).
17 The visit of the Abbasid Caliph al-Mahdi (775–85) to the shrine of St George in Lydda took place during the celebrations of the saint's feast. See Yaqut 1990: v. Lydd.
18 Yaqut 1990: v. Rusafat Hisham; Caseau 2001: 47.
19 Ibn al-Shihna 1984: 81–2.
20 See Yaqut, v. Antaqiya. Al-Masʿudi mentions another church dedicated to Mary in Antioch (Kennedy 1992: 181–98).
21 The church of Hims is said to have been built in stone of an amazing beauty. Saliby and Griesheimer 2000: 383–400; Ibn Rusta 1955: 92.
22 Nasrallah 1985: 49–53.
23 Al-Muqaddasi 1967: 147.
24 See Ibn Khurradadhbih 1967: 161–2.
25 Hitti 1951: 435; Russell 1985: 47; Mahmud 1989: 195; Tritton 1930: 102; Schick 1995: 84–5; Grabar 1996: 50; Marsham 2013.
26 Peri 1999: 97.
27 Al-Muqaddasi 1967: 159.
28 On the continuity of settlement patterns see Hamarneh 2003: 223–30.

29 Foss 2010: 82.
30 Khamis 1997: 45–64; Khamis 2001: 159–76.
31 Piccirillo 1984b; Piccirillo 2001; Schick 1995.
32 See Spieser 1995: 311–20; Di Segni 2017: 294–5.
33 Di Segni 2017: 299.
34 Piccirillo 1981: 46–7.
35 Piccirillo 1981: 74–5.
36 Piccirillo 1993: 313.
37 Piccirillo 1993: 306.
38 Piccirillo 1993: 304–5.
39 Negev 1981: 68; Gatier 1992: 147.
40 Images of the same repertoire adorned the mosaic pavements of the newly established Umayyad Qusur as Qasr al-Hallabat (Piccirillo 1993: 350); Qastal (Piccirillo 1993: 352–3; Bisheh 2000); Shuqayra al-Gharbiya (Shdaifat 2008: 184–7; Ben Badhann 2009: 8–13; Hamarneh 2019: 133–41).
41 Earlier examples of cities depicted on mosaics floors are visible on the pavement of the Church of SS Peter and Paul in Jerash/Gerasa, depicting Alexandria and Memphis (Piccirillo 1993: 292); and adorn the topographical frame of the Nile Delta in the Church of St John in Gerasa (Piccirillo 1993: 273–4, 286–7).
42 Or most likely by a personification as in the circular medallion enclosing the personification of Thetis on the mosaic pavement of the Church of the Apostles in Madaba (Piccirillo 1993: 106–7 and 304).
43 Al-Husan 2001: 11, figs 15–16.
44 Al-Husan 2001: 11, figs 15–16; and 2002: 82, 89, 91–2, figs. 16 and 21.
45 Gatier 1992: 147.
46 On the earlier church see Najjar and Sa'id 1994: 554–6.
47 Najjar and Sa'id 1994: 551, figs 4 and 9.
48 Zayadine 1971: 74–6, fig. 3, pl. 4.
49 See Najjar and Sa'id 1994: 552.
50 Piccirillo 2002: 229; Talgam 2014: 384–5.
51 Meimaris and Kritikakou-Nikolaropoulou 2012: 403–4; Talgam 2014: 385–6.
52 Saller 1948; Piccirillo 1984a: 323–3, fig. 11; Piccirillo 1993: 266–7, figs 484 and 488.
53 De Vaux 1938: 254–8, fig. 4; Piccirillo 1985: 347–8, Ill. 3, fig. 8.
54 Al-Muheisen 2006: 86.
55 al-Husan 2001: 11; al-Husan 2002: 82 and 89, figs 22 and 31.
56 Schick 1991: 75–8; Piccirillo 1994a; Piccirillo 1994b: 136–7, figs 24–5; Piccirillo 1994c: 242–6.
57 Talgam has argued that the cities and towns represented on mosaic pavements are those with a dominant Christian majority, while the two new capitals of *Jund al-Urdunn* and *Jund Filastin* are missing (Talgam 2014: 390).
58 Dating according to the era of the *Hijra* in a Christian context is not very common. In this specific case, it is connected with the laying of a new geometric mosaic and, as suggested by Di Segni and Tepper (2004: 344–8, fig. 2), could have indicated that Muslims prayed in churches. See also Bashear 1991: 267–82; Bowersock 2006: 109–10; Di Segni 2006–2007: 122.
59 Rami, di Segni and Kloner 1990: 313, 315–20, Ill. 2, pls. 43–4, figs. 5–7.
60 Di Segni 1993; 1997: 252; 2003b: 247–8.
61 The dates in the inscriptions follow the era of Eleutheropolis, as was common for the sites in the southern Judean Hills. compare Di Segni 2003b: 253–6, figs 5–6.
62 Di Segni 2003b: 252–3, fig. 4; Di Segni 2012: 327–30; Peleg and Batz 2012: 303–12, 315 and 319, fig. 16.

63 Humbert et al. 2000: 122; Saliou 2000: 405–6, fig. 7b, No. 15.
64 Meimaris, Kritikakou and Bougia 1992: 292, 295 and 299, Nos 491, 500, 513; Di Segni 2003b: 113–14.
65 Piccirillo 1994c: 242–6, Nos 1a, 2.
66 Piccirillo 1994d; Di Segni 1994: 531–33; and 1998: 449–50, No. 56.
67 Di Segni 1992: 256–7.
68 Di Segni 2006: 579–80, fig. 3.
69 Piccirillo 1982a: 335.
70 The main dedicatory inscription was partially destroyed (Piccirillo 1982a: 337–40).
71 Meimaris 1989; Donceel-Voute 1999.
72 Images of living creatures on the mosaic pavement of the church dated to 623 were removed. The renovation that followed included two letters, TM, with a horizontal line above them, added to one of the repair patches, Di Segni (2006: 578–9, figs. 1–2) has suggested that the numbers may refer to the date of 832.
73 The term 'iconophobia' was suggested by Piccirillo as to differentiate the phenomenon from byzantine 'iconoclasm' (Piccirillo 1996). See also Bowersock 2006: 92–7.
74 Piccirillo 2007: 109.
75 Piccirillo 1996: 183–4; in the upper church of Massuh a cross and a building replaced two figures that were destroyed. See Piccirillo 1983: 335–46; Piccirillo 1993: 253.
76 Ognibene 2002: 140.
77 On this question, see: Ognibene 1998: 372–89; and 2002; Shiyyab 2006; Hamarneh and Hinkanen 2008: 257–8; Brubaker and Haldon 2001: 30–6; and 2011: 105–17, 232–4; Brubaker 2013: 21–2; Bowersock 2006: 92–111; Schick 1995: 180–219; Ribak 2007: 33–4; and 2012: 1–21; Maguire 2011: 111–19; Talgam 2014: 425–430; Reynolds 2017: 27–8.
78 Ognibene 2002: 320–1.
79 Piccirillo 1984a: 329–40.
80 Piccirillo 1989: 226–34
81 Piccirillo 1998: 376–7.
82 Piccirillo 1989: 45–7.
83 Simpson 2018: 11–14.

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PART VI

LIMITS OF EMPIRE

Rebellion, Resistance and Legacy

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CHAPTER TWENTY THREE

KHARIJISM IN THE UMAYYAD PERIOD[1]

Hannah-Lena Hagemann and Peter Verkinderen

INTRODUCTION

The Kharijites (*al-khawarij*, literally, 'those who go out') occupy a prominent place in early Islamic history and historiography as some of the most notorious rebels of the Umayyad period. They can be characterized as loosely connected groups of insurgents apparently motivated by a combination of piety and grievances against the authorities, although their origins remain obscure. The Islamic tradition links the emergence of the Khawarij to the first civil war (*fitna*; 656–61) between the fourth caliph, ʿAli b. Abi Talib, and Muʿawiya b. Abi Sufyan, who in 661 secured rulership over the Islamic polity and is commonly considered the founder of the Umayyad caliphate. After Muʿawiya, Umayyad rule would last, with the partial exception of the period of the second civil war of *c.* 683–92, until its overthrow by the Abbasid movement in 749–50. Kharijism thus seems to have come into being almost concurrently with the Umayyad ruling house, and it produced most of its particularly successful proponents whenever Umayyad power was weakening.

Kharijite revolts were mostly small affairs, easily repressed and with little impact overall on political developments. Nevertheless, Kharijism received a lot of attention from early Islamic scholars, particularly the extreme piety its adherents are said to have expressed. Their zealotry reportedly led them to seek a martyr's death in battle against those they considered unbelievers, which they understood as a necessary requirement for living and dying according to God's will.

Indeed, the Khawarij left a lasting impression in the Islamic tradition, so much so that the very term 'Khariji' came to mean 'rebel' in general, with a distinct religious undertone implying that those labelled Kharijite were also rebels against good Islamic practice and doctrine. As a twelfth-century heresiographer put it:

> Anyone who rebels against the rightful leader agreed upon by the community, whether the rebellion took place at the time of the Companions against the rightly-guided leaders or against their Successors or against the leaders of any time, is called a Kharijite.[2]

This concept has survived until today – the term (neo-)Kharijite is frequently employed to describe militant Islamists and *takfiri*s, as well as inconvenient political opponents

such as the Muslim Brotherhood.[3] In turn, the early Kharijites have also been called 'Islam's First Terrorists'.[4]

Terminology is an important aspect in identifying and assessing Kharijism in the Umayyad period (and beyond). In the fragments of source material that are commonly attributed to Kharijite rebels, they rarely use the term 'Khariji' or 'Khawarij' to refer to themselves.[5] Instead, they use the appellation *al-shurat*, 'those who sell themselves', presumably in reference to the Qur'anic passages that promise Paradise to those who offer their lives for God's cause,[6] an idea that was by no means exclusive to Kharijism.[7] Other terms applied to the Kharijites, which they sometimes also used to describe themselves, include *al-muhakkima* (after their famous slogan *la hukma illa li-llah*, 'judgment belongs to God alone') and *al-Haruriyya/ahl Harura'*, alluding to formative events in the history of Kharijism (see below). Some terms were only used by detractors of the Kharijites, like *mariqa* ('those who overshoot/stray from the mark').[8]

The following survey of Kharijism in the Umayyad period seeks to provide an overview of major events and prominent rebels in this period. It will begin with a discussion of the available primary source material for studying Umayyad-era Kharijites and then address the economic, social, and tribal backgrounds of the Khawarij. We will look at Kharijite doctrine and subdivisions, and briefly sketch approaches to Kharijism in the scholarly secondary literature. The conclusion will pull together the various themes addressed in this piece and present further avenues of research.

THE SOURCES

One of the problems involved in analysing Umayyad-era (and later) Kharijism is the unfortunate circumstance that only very little primary source material allegedly produced by the Kharijites themselves has survived. There are no extant chronicles, for example, that would tell us the history of early Islam from a specifically Kharijite point of view, nor any Kharijite *tabaqat* or *tafsir* works. Our main sources of information regarding Kharijite history and thought are the works of the Islamic tradition, which was almost entirely hostile to Kharijism[9] and presents its own challenges: the sources are late, fragmentary, often contradictory, and full of literary motifs that obscure the historical events behind them (if indeed the purported events actually took place).[10] Thus, we learn about Kharijite rebels and their intentions almost exclusively from heavily reworked representations by their enemies, which necessarily produces a skewed image.[11]

A separate set of sources is formed by texts from archives in North Africa and Oman, where Ibadism, the only surviving branch of Kharijism, has thrived to this day.[12] Ibadi sources offer some alternative views of early Kharijism, but there is no such thing as an objective source and so they, too, have their own agenda – many Ibadi scholars are highly critical of Kharijism and are keen to emphasize that Ibadism has little or nothing to do with it.[13] Other Ibadi authors seek to rehabilitate Kharijism and thus legitimize Ibadism by rejecting the 'mainstream' Islamic tradition's portrayal of the Kharijites.[14] However, as Ibadism is largely outside the purview of this chapter, Ibadi source material will not feature prominently in the remainder of this section.

All this is not to say that some genuine Kharijite material might not have survived in non-Kharijite works; indeed, this seems quite likely. Patricia Crone claimed to

have identified fragments of a Kharijite discussion regarding the necessity of the imamate,[15] and Adam Gaiser argues that early Islamic material on Kharijite martyrs contains remnants of earlier Kharijite attempts to create their own heroic martyrdom cycles; these stories were appropriated by Ibadi scholars to fashion the group's own hagiographies and identity.[16] The problem, of course, lies in securely identifying such fragments and remnants as both early and originally Kharijite in the absence of established criteria. In fact, Michael Cook has convincingly shown one such fragment, a letter from the alleged founder of Ibadi Kharijism to the caliph ʿAbd al-Malik b. Marwan (r. 685/692–705), to have been misattributed regarding both the sender (whose historicity he calls into question) and the recipient.[17]

The Kharijite material that purportedly survived in the works of the Islamic tradition consists mostly of poetry and sermons. The Kharijites had a reputation for their oratory skills, exhorting their comrades to battle, disparaging corrupt rulers and celebrating their fallen in rousing verses.[18] This might explain the relative abundance of allegedly Kharijite poetry in early Islamic literature.[19] Similarly, the famous sermon attributed to Abu Hamza, a late Umayyad-era Kharijite leader, is quoted in a large number of early Islamic works.[20] The extant Kharijite poetry and sermons have been conveniently collected and edited in a number of compilations.[21] However, as they are transmitted in the works of the early Islamic tradition, the difficulties of provenance, attribution, and authenticity that characterize this tradition need to be taken into account in the analysis of this 'Kharijite' material. We cannot simply assume that these fragments are genuine expressions of Kharijite identity and thought.

Coins are the second kind of Kharijite source material in existence.[22] They are usually identified as Kharijite in three ways: by identifying names on coins with Kharijite leaders known from the literary sources; by linking the date and mint of an unsigned coin to information in the literary sources about who controlled that mint at that date; and/or by linking unusual legends or visual motifs on coins to Kharijite doctrine, also derived from written sources.[23]

An example of the first method are the earliest extant Kharijite coins, minted in the late 680s to 690s in Fars and Kirman, which carry the name Qatari, whom the Islamic tradition identifies as one of the leaders of the Azariqa, a particularly violent subdivision of Khawarij apparently active in that region during that period. These coins, in Arab-Sasanian style, are almost identical to coins minted by government officials: they even use the caliphal titles *amir al-muʾminin* ('commander of the believers') and *ʿabd Allah* ('servant of God'), attributing them to Qatari. However, the slogan *la hukma illa li-llah* takes the place of other religious formulae in the obverse margin (see Figure 23.1).[24]

Probably the last Kharijite coins from the Umayyad period were minted in Kufa in 745–6, and they exemplify the second method of identifying Kharijite coins: they are unsigned, but because al-Dahhak b. Qays, the leader of a Kharijite rebellion during the third *fitna*, had taken control of Kufa at that time, it is likely that they can be attributed to him. This Kufan dirham also carries the slogan *la hukma illa li-llah* (see Figure 23.2).[25]

In some cases, scholars have identified coins as Kharijite only because they carry legends or symbols that deviate from the standard pattern, especially if these inscriptions can be connected to something the written tradition associates with Kharijism. The slogan *la hukma illa li-llah* is a good example: the presence of this

Figure 23.1 Dirham in the name of 'Qatari, Commander of the Believers' (in Pahlavi), mint: BYSh (Bishapur, in Fars), year 75 AH (694–5 CE). Obverse margin (in Arabic letters): *la hukma illa lillah*. Stephen Album Rare Coins Auction 20 (18 September 2014) lot 115 https://pro.coinarchives.com/ (photograph courtesy of Stephen Album).

Figure 23.2 Anonymous dirham, mint: al-Kufa, year 128 AH (745–6 CE). In the upper quarter of the outer obverse margin: *la hukma illa li-llah*. Stephen Album Rare Coins Auction 20 (18 September 2014) lot 250 (photograph courtesy of Stephen Album).

legend on a coin is often considered enough to identify it as Kharijite and assume the presence of Kharijite activity,[26] even in the absence of corroborating evidence in the written sources. However, it should be noted that this particular legend also appears on coins minted by other insurgents who are not usually identified as Kharijites in the sources, such as the Zanj.[27] Another example is a coin minted by the governor of Kirman, al-Hakam b. Abi al-ʿAs, in the year 56/675–6, which carries an unusual legend that could be read as *bism Allah rabb al-Hakam* ('In the name of God, the lord of al-Hakam') or *rabb al-hukm* ('The lord of judgment'); the latter has been connected to the *la hukma* slogan, causing speculations on potential Kharijite sympathies on the part of this governor (see Figure 23.3).[28]

There also remains the question of how far we can take the numismatic evidence.[29] As it is dependent on the contextualization provided by the written sources, it can be tempting to read too much into coins and their relation to historical events and developments. For example, it has been argued that the similarity of Kharijite coins

Figure 23.3 Dirham in the name of al-Hakam b. Abi al-ʿAs (to the right of the bust, in Pahlavi letters), mint: NAR (Narmashir in Kirman), year 56 AH (675–6 CE). Obverse margin (in Arabic letters): *bism Allah rabb al-hukm/al-Hakam*. Stephen Album Rare Coins and Wilkes & Curtis Horizontal Auction I (2 October 2016) lot 227 (photograph courtesy of Stephen Album).

to government coins is due to a conscious decision by the Kharijites to minimize or leave out completely 'markers of sectarian identity' for economic reasons:[30] Kharijite coins had to be accepted by non-Kharijites as well.[31] However, it is also possible that the lack of a 'sectarian identity' on Kharijite coins is indicative of the lack of specific 'heterodox' positions that would have needed to be hidden.

In sum, the study of Kharijism in the Umayyad period (and later) is mostly based on sources hostile to it. Modern assessments of seventh- and eighth-century Kharijites have thus already been filtered through the lens of ninth- and tenth-century approaches to this phenomenon, written down by scholars, many of whom worked toward establishing some kind of consensus regarding the events of early Islamic history that emphasized the values of stability and communal togetherness.[32]

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF KHARIJITE REBELLIONS IN THE UMAYYAD PERIOD[33]

Early Islamic historical sources display an extraordinary interest in rebellions. A good number of these rebellions are labelled 'Kharijite',[34] although no clear distinction between Kharijite and non-Kharijite revolts is immediately observable; we will return to this issue in the conclusion. In the following, the term 'Kharijite rebellion' is thus applied to any uprising labelled as Kharijite in the sources. There is no space here for a detailed overview of the history of Kharijite uprisings during the Umayyad period, although an updated survey is badly needed: the last monograph in a European language that focuses on the history of Kharijite rebellions dates back more than a century.[35] (See the map in Figure 23.4, and Figure 23.5 and Table 23.1 at the end of the chapter, for an overview of the tribal affiliations of Kharijite leaders and the list of Kharijite revolts in the Umayyad period.)

The Islamic tradition places the roots of Kharijism in the division of the early Muslim community caused by the policies of the third caliph, ʿUthman, and his subsequent murder in 656, which led to the first *fitna* and the first schisms in Islam. ʿAli b. Abi Talib, ʿUthman's successor, was not accepted by many among ʿUthman's

Figure 23.4 Map of the main areas of Kharijite activity in the Umayyad period.

proponents and critics. He first dealt with the critics, defeating the Prophet's wife ʿA'isha and the important Companions Talha and al-Zubayr near Basra (the so-called Battle of the Camel, in 656). Then, after having secured Iraq, ʿAli turned his attention to ʿUthman's cousin and governor of Syria, Muʿawiya b. Abi Sufyan. It is at the first serious confrontation between the Syrian and Iraqi armies at Siffin, near al-Raqqa, in 657 that the origin myth of the Kharijites is located.

ʿAli's acceptance of Muʿawiya's proposal during the battle at Siffin to have an arbitration rather than war decide on the conflict between them is said to have caused the defection of part of his army. These defectors, who are considered the first Kharijites, are sometimes called *al-Muhakkima*, after their slogan *la hukma illa li-llah* ('Judgment is God's alone'): presumably, they meant by this that giving in to Muʿawiya's demand amounted to putting human judgment above God's judgment. However, the precise meaning of the Kharijite maxim (and thus of their protest) has been questioned;[36] it has even been proposed that the entire arbitration story at Siffin is a fabrication that was concocted to explain the slogan,[37] and that the origin of the Kharijites has nothing to do with Siffin.[38]

Having concluded the truce at Siffin, ʿAli returned to Kufa, but a number of his former supporters seceded and set up camp at Harura', near Kufa. Reportedly, the term *al-Haruriyya* as an appellation for Kharijites goes back to this episode. It seems that ʿAli managed to convince (all or most of) the mutineers there to come back into the fold, but as the arbitration dragged on, more Kharijites left Basra and Kufa and gathered on the bank of the Nahrawan canal, east of the Tigris. There, a battle took place between these defectors and ʿAli, during which the former were heavily defeated

and most of them killed. This battle, usually dated to the summer of 658, was a pyrrhic victory for ʿAli: it set off a number of violent uprisings against him in Iraq, by survivors of Nahrawan and their sympathizers, and ʿAli's murder in January 661 is said to have been motivated by the events at Nahrawan. Al-Baladhuri mentions five of these uprisings in the six months after Nahrawan.[39] The groups involved in these were small (typically estimated at 200 men), and they all took place in the Kufan-controlled parts of Iraq and the Jibal.[40] They were easily put down by ʿAli's troops.

After Muʿawiya's takeover in 661, a spate of new, mostly small Kharijite uprisings took place in Iraq by groups who allegedly had disagreed with ʿAli, but had refused to fight him; now that Muʿawiya had assumed power, they decided to revolt. The earliest of these, led by Farwa b. Nawfal al-Ashjaʿi of the Banu Murra, was the first to defeat a government force sent against them. Located in Kufan territory, his substantial group (about 500 men) was finally defeated by a mixed Kufan-Syrian force in the summer of 661.[41] Over the next two years, seven other uprisings (of 20 to 400 men) are mentioned in the sources in the Kufa area; all of them were defeated by armies sent by the city's governor, al-Mughira b. Shuʿba.[42] In the remaining years of Muʿawiya's reign after 663, no more Kharijite uprisings are mentioned in Kufan territory.

Simultaneously, the Basra area saw its first Kharijite uprisings. Between 661 and 681, the sources mention five Kharijite uprisings that started in Basra.[43] As in Kufa, these were small affairs (typically 70 men) and usually swiftly repressed by the governor.

The uprisings labelled Kharijite up to this point have a number of characteristics in common. They were all carried out by relatively small groups. Analysis of the names of the participants and other indications about their backgrounds in the sources show that these early Kharijite rebellions were mostly led by Arabs from the main Iraqi tribes, residing in Kufa and Basra, with a predominance of Mudaris.[44] Among the participants, we find representatives of several Iraqi tribes, but also a number of *mawali*. Two groups are said to have consisted almost exclusively of *mawali*, and at least one of these was also led by a *mawla*.

Most of these early uprisings follow a conspicuous pattern: a number of Kharijites meet regularly in the house of one of their leaders, often described as very pious and respected men, to complain about the rule of the Umayyads. They choose a leader, who grudgingly accepts. Sometimes a number of them get arrested by the governor at this stage. At a certain moment, they decide to rebel openly and leave the city. We do not hear much of their activities, but some are said to harass and even kill Muslims who do not agree with them. They are then attacked by forces sent by the governor, defeated, and either killed or given a safe-conduct (*aman*). [45]

The governorships of Ziyad b. Abihi (665–73) and his son ʿUbayd Allah (674–84) in Iraq, during the caliphates of Muʿawiya and Yazid, are described in the sources as periods of a heavy crackdown on dissent in Basra and Kufa. This drove even one of the most well-known and respected quietist dissenters in Basra, Abu Bilal Mirdas b. Udayya, to revolt with a group of 40 men in the year 680–1.[46]

This repression may have also been one of the driving factors for the explosion, and changed nature, of Kharijite revolts during the second *fitna*. A large number of Kharijites, including the eponymous 'founders' of what were later identified as the four main branches of Kharijism (see below), joined the revolt of ʿAbd Allah

b. al-Zubayr (r. 683–92) against Yazid b. Muʿawiya (r. 680–3). After Yazid's death, the Kharijites reportedly broke with Ibn al-Zubayr because of religious disagreements and went their own way.[47]

One of these groups, called *al-Najadat* after their first leader, the Bakri chief Najda b. ʿAmir al-Hanafi, who had already rebelled in the Yamama after al-Husayn's killing at Karbalaʾ in 681, conquered Bahrayn, the Yamama and parts of the Hijaz. They set up their own polity which lasted for almost ten years, until they were finally defeated by a Basran army in the year 693.[48] A second group, *al-Azariqa*, also named after their first leader Nafiʿ b. al-Azraq (the son of a manumitted slave, of the same tribe as Najda, the Banu Hanifa), became known as the most extremist Kharijite group in history. They are remembered for massacring and looting Muslim populations in the area of Ahwaz before being pushed into Fars and further into Kirman by successive Basran armies sent against them. They were defeated by the top general al-Muhallab b. Abi Sufra, in the service of first the Zubayrids and then the Umayyads, in a long series of campaigns that culminated around the year 697, when the *mawali* in the group seceded from the Arabs led by the famous Qatari b. al-Fujaʾa. Both groups were decidedly defeated in the next year.[49]

A number of elements in these uprisings during the second *fitna* are different from previous 'Kharijite' revolts. For the first time, the revolts ceased to be a local Iraqi phenomenon: they spread out far beyond the boundaries of Iraq, as far as Sistan and Yemen, and there are reports that local people in the provinces joined the revolts. Despite the widespread distribution of Kharijite rebellions during the second *fitna*, their leadership was more homogenous than during the early uprisings. It was drawn almost exclusively from Iraqi northern Arab tribes: of the 14 leaders of the Kharijite revolts during the second *fitna*, seven were from Bakr b. Waʾil (of which four hailed from the Banu Hanifa), five were Tamimis, one was a *mawla*, and one has not been identified (see Table 23.1 at the end of this chapter for an overview of the tribal background of Kharijite leaders). Whereas the earlier rebellions were short-lived affairs (a couple of days to a few months), carried out by small groups (often less than 100 men, maximum 500), these new rebellions stood out for being much larger (allegedly, Najda had 6,000 followers, and Qatari 10,000 or even 15,000[50]), and they held out much longer (the rebellion in the Arabian Peninsula started in 680–1 and was quelled only in 692; the uprising kicked off by Ibn al-Azraq in 683–4 ended only in 697–8). Furthermore, although guerrilla tactics were still widely used by the rebels, they also tried their hand at using government structures: physical proof thereof survives in the coins from Fars struck in the name of Qatari,[51] the last leader of the Azariqa (see Figure 23.1). It has been argued that ʿAbd al-Malik's famous reform of the imperial coinage was primarily meant to counter the ideological challenge posed by these Kharijite groups.[52]

After these large rebellions had been quelled, the first four decades of the eighth century saw a period of relative quiet on the Kharijite front. The Kharijite rebellions that did take place were mostly limited to two areas: the Jazira and Sistan. In the Jazira, a particular type of small uprising developed, characterized by 'a heady fusion of pastoralist muscle and theatrical asceticism' attractive to members of local tribal groups.[53] The first, and most dangerous, of these was started in the final years of Qatari's rebellion (around 695) by a certain Salih b. Musarrih but became successful

only under Shabib b. Yazid,[54] a Shaybani who had been dropped from the *diwan*. Shabib had his base in the plains to the east of the Tigris, but he severely threatened Kufa itself and took the important town al-Madaʾin in Iraq in 696 with his band that had by then reportedly grown to about 1,000 men. He finally drowned in the Karun river in Ahwaz, allegedly on his way to join Qatari in Kirman. A number of these rebellions, which were invariably led by (and mostly comprised) tribesmen of the local Bakr b. Waʾil (especially the Banu Shayban) and Tamim, took place in the Jazira in this tradition in the 730s especially. These were generally small affairs, limited to the area east of the Tigris, whose 'historiographic coverage far outstrips their political significance'.[55] In Sistan, Kharijism reportedly arrived during Qatari's rebellion in Fars in the 690s, and rebellions ascribed to Kharijites frequently dislodged government control from Sistan until the coming of the Saffarids in the 860s.[56] In Sistan, the identity of the leaders of the rebellions is not always known, but at least in one case, he was a Shaybani, too.[57]

During the third *fitna*, after the murder of al-Walid II in 744, we see the return of larger Kharijite rebellions. A local uprising in the Jaziran Kharijite tradition apparently led by a Shaybani religious scholar turned into a full-blown rebellion under the former's successor al-Dahhak b. Qays al-Shaybani, who conquered Kufa and Mosul. His army is said to have grown to 40,000 or even 120,000 men, reportedly because he paid high wages, but also because other contenders in the power struggle over the Islamic empire joined him, including the important general and son of the caliph Hisham, Sulayman. After al-Dahhak's death in battle at Kafartutha in the Jazira at the hands of the last Umayyad caliph, Marwan II, the survivors joined that other powerful opponent of the Marwanids, the Talibid rebel ʿAbd Allah b. Muʿawiya, in Fars. The remnants of al-Dahhak's Kharijite group were finally defeated in Oman in 751–2.[58] Independently from al-Dahhak, a *qadi* in Hadramawt by the name of ʿAbd Allah b. Yahya (nicknamed Talib al-Haqq) started a rebellion in 745 that would engulf the entire south of the Arabian Peninsula, including Mecca. After he was killed by Syrian troops in 748, one of his followers, a member of the Omani ruling family al-Julanda, set up his own imamate, which also ended abruptly when the imam was killed by an Abbasid army in 752.[59]

In North Africa, a series of Berber rebellions broke out in 739–40 near Tangier; they routed a number of caliphal armies and were only defeated in 743, by which time they were threatening the capital Kairouan. Later Ibadi sources claim the seeds of these revolts were planted by Kharijite and Ibadi missionaries sent from Basra 20 years earlier, who had played an important role in spreading Islam among these tribes,[60] but doubt has been shed on the extent of the role of Kharijism in these rebellions.[61] While the rebels do appear to have endorsed some form of 'Kharijism', reportedly in its Sufri and Ibadi forms, we do not know what exactly this entailed, and Ibadi and Sufri Islam in the mid-eighth century are very difficult to disentangle.[62] It is just as likely, if not more so, that the political and economic marginalization of the Berber tribes under Umayyad rule was the underlying cause of these rebellions. At the very least, it made the rebels more susceptible to Kharijite and/or Ibadi teachings as an outlet for discontent.[63] If these revolts can be classified as Kharijite/Ibadi, they were the first such rebellions outside the heartlands of Kharijite activity (Arabia, the Jazira, Iraq, Iran) but coincided with the reappearance of larger Kharijite revolts in those regions in the 740s.

Kharijism did not die out with the Umayyads. On the contrary, in the first decades of Abbasid rule, Kharijite and Ibadi uprisings in Oman and North Africa succeeded where their predecessors had failed, setting up longer-lived polities.[64]

KHARIJITE THOUGHT

A detailed depiction of the various sects of Kharijism is impossible within the confines of this chapter, and this has been done elsewhere already.[65] The following will thus provide only a short overview of the doctrinal issues put forward by Kharijites as portrayed by Islamic heresiography. Equally, we will not discuss the pitfalls of (Islamic) heresiography and the problem of orthodoxy in Islam in detail – for this, the reader is asked to consult the works referenced in the notes.[66]

The development of Kharijite doctrine according to the Islamic tradition began with a second origin myth: in 683, the Basran Kharijites are said to have split into four factions over specific questions of leadership (*al-imama*), secession (*hijra*) from the community, the treatment of non-Kharijite Muslims, and the fate of Kharijite sinners. (Were they to be excluded from the community? How should they be punished?) These four subdivisions – the Azariqa, the Najdiyya, the Sufriyya, and the Ibadiyya – are considered *usul al-khawarij*, the 'roots of the Kharijites', from whom all of the numerous subsequent subdivisions descended. This purported historical event has a distinct literary tone to it: all four of the alleged founders had previously supported Ibn al-Zubayr's bid for the caliphate but withdrew their support when he refused to condemn the third caliph, ʿUthman; three of them (and thus their groups) are named after colours (Ibn Ibad; Ibn al-Azraq; Ibn Asfar; white, blue/green and yellow, respectively); and all of them appear to have come into existence with fully-formed, sophisticated and detailed religio-political doctrines, in the same year and in the same place.[67]

Above all, Kharijism in all its forms is associated with piety. The sources abound with depictions of the Kharijites' extraordinary religious devotion; their famous rallying cry *la hukma illa li-llah* exemplifies the focus on the divine word, with Kharijism the most Qurʾan-centric form of early Islam: all Kharijite groups considered the Qurʾan to be the most significant (if not the sole) source of authority on the basis of which a righteous Muslim life should be led.[68] A number of Kharijites are thus also said to have rejected the use of *hadith* (the Tradition of the Prophet as recorded in historical reports).[69] Their physical appearance reportedly displayed their piety as well: they were emaciated from constant fasting, and they sported prostration marks on their faces and calluses on their hands and knees from continuous prayer.[70]

While piety was the Kharijites' common denominator, they were divided over how it should be understood. They differed, sometimes significantly, regarding the correct understanding of the Qurʾan and the resulting interactions with their environment, which by necessity included non-Kharijite Muslims and non-Muslims. As a rule, Kharijites of all colours did not have a problem with the latter at all; strictly following the Qurʾanic stipulations regarding *ahl al-kitab* ('people of the Book', that is, non-Muslim monotheists), they were content to extract tribute from Jews and Christians and otherwise left them in peace. At least one Kharijite rebel is said to have been well-regarded by local Christians.[71]

However, there was marked disagreement over the treatment of non-Kharijite Muslims. Most of the Kharijites we know from the sources apparently adopted a militant stance. Kharijite violence was based on the idea that the Muslim community had to be cleansed from sin, elevating the use of force to a higher level: opponents of the Khawarij were considered enemies of God who had to be fought for His sake.[72] They often attacked non-Kharijite Muslims indiscriminately, and as they considered the latter polytheists and unbelievers, the most extreme Kharijite factions also allowed the enslavement and even the killing of their opponents' wives and children, taking their property as spoils.[73] The militants' zealotry was the subject of fierce criticism on the part of the Islamic tradition, which focused on portraying excessive piety as dangerous and misleading, causing bloodshed and strife within the Muslim community.[74]

The Azariqa is widely considered to have been the most violent Kharijite faction and thus received a lot of attention from early and medieval Muslim scholars. Azraqites apparently considered it the duty of every true Muslim to leave the 'abode of unbelief' (*dar al-kufr*) and – based on the Prophet's example – emigrate to the 'abode of Islam' (*dar al-islam*), that is, to the Azariqa's own camp.[75] All others, including Kharijite quietists (*al-quʿud*; 'those who remain [at home]'), were regarded as unbelievers (*kuffar*) and could thus be lawfully killed or enslaved. They roamed the countryside and were said to have indiscriminately slaughtered everyone who disagreed with them (*istiʿrad*); anyone who had committed a grave sin (*sahib al-kabir*) had to be excluded from the Azraqite community so as to prevent the corruption of the entire group, which would endanger its status as the only faction to be saved in the Hereafter. The concealment of one's belief (*taqiyya*) in enemy territory was forbidden – martyrdom on the battlefield was the desired outcome, after all.[76]

Most Kharijite subdivisions, even militant ones, rejected the Azariqa's excessive violence against non-Kharijite Muslims and their insistence on *jihad* and *hijra* – the sources are full of reports of internal strife among the Khawarij.[77] Sometimes, this was due to doctrinal changes resulting from the success of a certain Kharijite group: the Najdites, for example who came to dominate considerable territory on the Arabian Peninsula, quickly moderated their positions on the grave sinner (who should be punished but not excluded from the *umma*, as that would have weakened Najdite authority), as well as the treatment of non-Kharijite Muslims: considering that the Najdites were far outnumbered by their non-Kharijite subjects, it would have been impossible to kill or convert all of their subjects.[78]

While the idea of fighting God's enemies seems initially to have been common to all Kharijite groups,[79] there also developed a non-violent strand of Kharijism. A sizeable number of quietist Kharijites (*al-quʿud*) seem to have been involved in intellectual pursuits, especially in Basra in the second half of the Umayyad period, where they developed forms of (mostly) non-violent Kharijite doctrine. Like the militants, they considered it their most important duty to protest and fight against unjust, illegitimate rulership, but they accepted non-Kharijite rule, allowed most legal interactions (like marriage and inheritance) with non-Kharijites, and generally declined to participate in open revolt; indeed, they appear to have been respected members of their intellectual circles.[80] 'Intellectual' Kharijism thus thrived in Basra and beyond. The focus on justice may have been one of the reasons why Kharijism in

its two forms (and sometimes in a combination of both, as in the case of Abu Bilal) did not cease after ʿAli's assassination but continued throughout the Umayyad and into the Abbasid period.[81]

A second important point of doctrine commonly associated with Kharijism is the principle of egalitarianism regarding the office of imam. In contrast to the doctrine that rulership should be restricted to the Prophet's tribe, the Quraysh, the Kharijites allegedly argued that it was due the most virtuous and pious man, Quraysh or not, Arab or not; the family of the Prophet was not granted a special position.[82] The Kharijite imam was considered a *primus inter pares* who did not have a special status or privileges; the religious significance of his office was greatly reduced among most Kharijites, who considered their imam mostly a military leader, although he was also responsible for upholding Islamic public life, like the Friday prayer.[83] If he erred or failed to maintain the divine law according to Kharijite standards, he had to be removed immediately to prevent him from leading the community astray.[84] If he refused to step down, rebellion against such an unjust imam became obligatory.[85] Needless to say, this principle contributed to the fissiparous nature of most Kharijite groups and led to the deposition even of some of their most famous leaders, like Najda and Qatari.

The impact of historical events on the development of Kharijite doctrine is obvious here as well: while the Kharijite leader never acquired the importance granted the Shiʿite imam or even the Umayyad caliphs, the Najdiyya's military defeat and near-total dissolution by the forces of the governor al-Hajjaj apparently led its remaining members to arrive at the conclusion that there was no legal need for an imam at all.[86] The Ibadiyya, on the other hand, found itself in the opposite situation: after their successes in North Africa and Arabia in the second half of the eighth century, Ibadi doctrine suddenly had to account for two Ibadi imams, both of whom claimed the title of *amir al-muʾminin*.[87] It was eventually decided that more than one legitimate leader could exist, but that the title of 'commander of the believers' was reserved for the (theoretical) leader of all Muslims.[88]

KHARIJISM IN MODERN SCHOLARSHIP

Even though Kharijites appear quite frequently in early Islamic literature, comparatively few studies of Kharijism have been conducted so far. This is partly because Kharijite subdivisions disappeared relatively quickly – while there might still have been some Kharijite communities in the tenth century,[89] these were rather small, and it is questionable how much they had in common with seventh- and eighth-century Kharijism. Another reason is the scarcity of Kharijite source material discussed above – it is not surprising that most scholarship on Kharijism deals either with poetry[90] or heresiography.[91]

Nevertheless, there have been a number of different approaches to early Kharijism in the roughly 130 years since the publication of the first monograph discussing Kharijite history.[92] They vary, sometimes significantly, in their assessments of the Kharijites' motives and intentions. Some emphasize the religious dimension of Kharijite protest, characterizing the rebels as particularly devout Muslims rejecting all human interference with the divine word.[93] Others focus on the political and socio-economic grievances of the first Kharijites who mourned the loss of the privileges they

had enjoyed during the reign of ʿUmar I (r. 634–44), but lost with ʿUthman's (r. 644–56) ascent to power. ʿAli's agreement to Muʿawiya's offer of a truce and arbitration was seen as a betrayal of his promise to return to the status quo of 'Umar I's rule.[94] Yet another perspective attributes the rise of Kharijism to the increased imposition of centralized control by the early Muslim polity – formerly nomadic tribesmen in particular resented their loss of authority and sovereignty to Medina and later Damascus. Their opposition should thus be understood as a response to political developments rather than pious zealotry, even if the language of resistance was decidedly religious in nature.[95] The Kharijites have also been described as a 'charismatic community',[96] or as an 'exclusivist, aristocratic community',[97] or, based on their alleged egalitarianism, as proponents of the anti-Arab *shuʿubiyya* movement.[98] Finally, Kharijite revolts have also been regarded as expressions not only of deep religious devotion, but of the imminent expectation of the End of Days. Within this mindset, violence was a manifestation of the Kharijites' desire to secure a place in Paradise by fighting all forms of perceived ungodliness before Judgment Day condemned one to eternal hellfire.[99]

While these evaluations of Kharijism show some fundamental differences, they are nevertheless largely based on the same sources, the works of the early Islamic tradition. They also all attempt a positivist reconstruction of early Kharijite history; studies focusing on the narrative role of Kharijism in the Islamic tradition, on the other hand, have been far and few between, even though the literary nature of many of the stories about Kharijite rebels has been noted.[100] An analysis of the representation of the first 50 years of Kharijism in early Islamic historiography does indeed reveal a host of well-known tropes within the material on Kharijite revolts.[101] Kharijites were a popular literary tool that allowed the author-compilers to address a variety of concerns such as the status of ʿAli, the dangers of communal strife, or the legal aspects of rebellion, that had very little to do with the historical Khawarij themselves. Sometimes, Kharijite actors were even portrayed in a positive manner to highlight the wickedness of the Umayyads.[102]

CONCLUSION

Kharijism is a diverse and complex phenomenon that all too often has been explained in a reductive manner. In concluding this chapter, we would like to take a step toward re-assessing this phenomenon. To begin with, we believe it is necessary to distinguish two broad concepts of Kharijism that overlap only in part. The first is a pietist intellectual tradition that apparently considered strict adherence to the word of God the sole basis for a just society and therefore rejected what it saw as the corruption of that ideal by the rule of the Umayyads (and later, the Abbasids). The second consists of a wide variety of violent uprisings directed against the Umayyad and Abbasid regimes, all labelled 'Kharijite' by early Islamic scholars.

The Islamic tradition, followed by much of the secondary literature, conflates these two concepts, which causes a major issue: the association of all these 'Kharijite' uprisings with the intellectual tradition of Kharijism implies a primarily religious motivation to all these revolts. This is exacerbated by the fact that the language of power and politics in the late antique and early Islamic Near East had a decidedly

religious tenor that sometimes conceals more prosaic intentions. In the case of Kharijite rebellions, there are a number of indications that they should not be understood exclusively in religious terms. First, there is an obvious geographical aspect: if Kharijite uprisings were primarily a religious phenomenon, how do we explain the conspicuous absence of Kharijite rebellions from Egypt,[103] Syria, al-Andalus,[104] and large parts of Iran? Second, there is a clear tribal factor in these uprisings: we can see a great overrepresentation of individuals from a very small number of Iraqi, northern Arab tribal subgroups in the leadership of these rebellions, and in many cases we find members of the same family – often brothers – among them. Third, the larger Kharijite uprisings coincide with the first, second and third *fitna*s. All this suggests that religious dissent was not the mainspring of all these Kharijite uprisings.

This raises the question how useful the term 'Kharijite' is for analytical purposes. On a very basic level, all Kharijite revolts seem to have been motivated by resentment against a government considered unjust, expressed in religious terms as deviating from God's prescriptions. However, the sources' use of 'Kharijite' as a blanket term may obscure different motivations for each of these rebellions. Indeed, considering the context in which they took place, their size, and geographical spread, it is at least questionable if the revolts against ʿAli, for instance, had much in common with the rebellion of al-Dahhak b. Qays or the uprisings of the Berber tribes in North Africa. The perceived injustices that lay at the basis of the various rebellions probably varied vastly, too. They likely included, among other things, attempts by the government to control resources and regulate the behaviour of their (Muslim) subjects, increased taxation pressure, lost privileges of tribal groups, unfair treatment of *mawali* and recent converts. This variety within the category of Kharijite revolts may well be one of the reasons why modern scholars have come to such widely varying conclusions about the nature of Kharijite uprisings. The focus on certain Kharijite groups and protagonists, most of them militants like the Azariqa, Shabib or al-Dahhak, has further contributed to obscuring the diversity of Kharijism.

If these rebellions were indeed as heterogeneous as we suspect, we also have to explain why early Islamic historiographers lumped them together under the term Kharijite, while at the same time not labelling all kinds of rebellions Kharijite. One reason may be that 'Kharijite' functioned as a kind of container term for all rebellions that did not fit into other, more clearly defined categories of revolt, for example uprisings by subjected communities against Islamic rule (the Kurds and the Zanj, for instance), or rebellions that aimed at bringing a rival elite family to power (such as various ʿAlid rebellions).

There is thus a need to re-appraise each of these uprisings individually, to analyze their specifics and the context in which they took place. Do they have any (political, doctrinal, socio-economic, ethnic) commonalities other than an expression of dissent? What do they have in common with, and what distinguishes them from, other contemporary uprisings that are not labelled Kharijite? Furthermore, a literary (historiographical, narratological) approach might be helpful in understanding how the form of early Islamic historical writing shaped the content of reports on Kharijism and thus yield deeper insight into this intriguing phenomenon of early Islamic history.

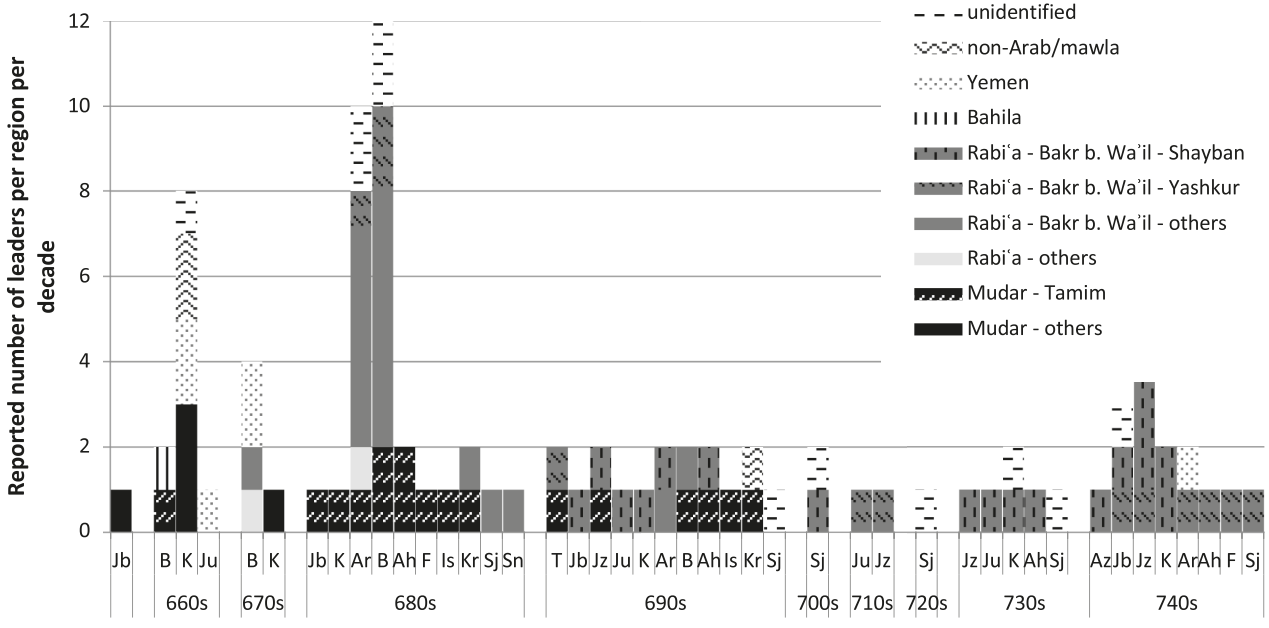

Figure 23.5 Tribal affiliation of Kharijite leaders in regions of the early Islamic Empire per decade and region, as mentioned in the sources.

Table 23.1 Kharijite Revolts in the Umayyad Period after Nahrawan.

Leader	*Leader's tribal background*	*Date*	*Size of revolt*	*Region(s)*
Ashras b. ʿAwf al-Shaybani	Shayban/Bakr b. Waʾil/ Mudar	Rabiʿ II 38/658	200	Kufa
Hilal and Mujalid b. ʿUllafa	Banu ʿAdi/Taym Ribab/ Mudar	Jumada I 38/658	200	Jibal
al-Ashhab b. Bishr + al-Ashʿath al-Bajali	Bajila/Yemen	Jumada II 38/658	180	Kufa
Saʿd/Saʿid b. Qifl al-Taymi	Taym Allah b. Thaʿlaba/ Bakr b. Waʾil/Mudar	Rajab 38/658	200	
Abu Maryam[1]	Saʿd/Tamim/Mudar	Ramadan 38/659	200/400	Kufa
Farwa b. Nawfal al-Ashjaʿi	Ghatafan b. Qays/Mudar	41/661 (after ʿAli's death)	More than 500	Kufa
ʿAbd Allah b. Abi al-Hawsaʾ al-Taʾi	Tayyiʾ/Yemen	-Rabiʿ I or II 41/ 661		Kufa
Hawthara b. Wadaʿ al-Asadi	Asad/Mudar	41/661	(small)	Kufa
Muʿayn/Maʿn b. ʿAbd Allah al-Muharibi	Muharib b. Khasafa/Qays/ Mudar	41/661-2		Kufa
Abu Maryam	*Mawla* of the Banu al-Harith b. Kaʿb (Azd/ Yemen)	41/661-2 or 42/ 662-663		Kufa
Abu Layla[2]	*Mawla*	-42/662-3	30	Kufa
Hayyan b. Zabyan al-Sulami	Sulaym/Qays/Mudar	(under Muʿawiya, r. 41-60/661-680)	20	Kufa
al-Mustawrid b. ʿUllafa	Banu ʿAdi/Taym Ribab/ Mudar (brother of Hilal and Mujalid)	(42) -Shaʿban 43/ 663	400>300	Kufa

Muʿadh b. Juwayn al-Taʾi	Tayyiʾ/Yemen	42/662-663	300	Kufa, Jukha
Sahm b. Ghalib al-Hujaymi + al-Khatim Yazid b. Malik al-Bahili	Tamim/Mudar + Waʾil/Bahila	41-46/661-667	70	Basra
Qarib b. Murra + Zuhhaf al-Taʾi	Azd/Yemen + Tayyiʾ/Yemen	50/670	70	Basra
Ziyad b. Kharrash al-ʿIjli	ʿIjl/Bakr b. Waʾil/Mudar	52/672	300	Basra
Tawwaf b. Ghallaq	ʿAbd al-Qays/Rabiʿa/Mudar	58/678	70	Basra
Hayyan b. Zabyan al-Sulami	Sulaym/Qays/Mudar	58/677 or 59/678	Less than 100	Kufa
Abu Bilal Mirdas b. Udayya	Rabiʿa b. Hanzala b. Malik /Tamim/Mudar	60-61/680-681	40	Basra
ʿUbayda/ʿAbida b. Hilal	Yashkur/Bakr b. Waʾil/Mudar	61/681	4	Basra
Abu Talut + Abu Fudayk + Ibn Aswad	Banu Zimman b. Malik/Bakr b. Waʾil/Mudar + Qays b. Thaʿlaba/Bakr b. Waʾil/Mudar + Yashkur/Bakr b. Waʾil/Mudar	64/683		Basra, Arabia (Mecca, Yamama)
Nafiʿ b. al-Azraq + Banu Mahuz + Hanzalah b. Bayhas[3] (Azariqa)	Banu Hanifa/Bakr b. Waʾil/Mudar + Banu Hanifa/Bakr b. Waʾil/Mudar + Tamim/Mudar	64-Jumada II 65/683-685	300>600-700	Basra, Arabia (Mecca)
ʿAbd Allah b. al-Saffar	Banu Sarim b. Muqaʾis/Saʿd/Tamim/Mudar	64/683		Basra, Arabia (Mecca)
ʿAbd Allah b. Ibad	Banu Sarim b. Muqaʾis/Saʿd/Tamim/Mudar	64/683		Basra, Arabia (Mecca)

(*continued*)

Table 23.1 Cont.

Leader	*Leader's tribal background*	*Date*	*Size of revolt*	*Region(s)*
Najda b. ʿAmir al-Hanafi (Najdiyya)	Banu Hanifa/Bakr b. Waʾil/ Mudar	64-72/683-692		Basra, Arabia (Mecca, Yamama, Bahrayn, Yaman, Taʾif)
ʿUbayd Allah b. Mahuz[4] (Azariqa)	Banu Salit b. al-Harith b. Yarbuʿ/Tamim/Mudar	65-66/684-686		Ahwaz
al-Zubayr b. ʿAli b. Mahuz (Azariqa)	Banu Hanifa/Bakr b. Waʾil/Mudar (cousin of ʿUbayd Allah b. Mahuz)	66-69/685-689		Ahwaz, Fars, Kirman, Isbahan, Kufa, Jibal, Rayy
ʿAtiyya b. al-Aswad al-Hanafi (Najdiyya)	Banu Hanifa/Bakr b. Waʾil/ Mudar	67-/686-		Arabia (Yamama, Bahrayn, ʿUman), Kirman, Sijistan, Sind
Qatari b. al-Fujaʾa[5] (Azariqa)	Banu Kabiya b. Hurqus b. Mazin/Tamim/Mudar	69?-77 or 78/ 688-697	10,000-15,000	Isbahan, Kirman, Ahwaz, Basra
Abu Fudayk	Qays b. Thaʿlaba/Bakr b. Waʾil/Mudar	72-73/	6,000	Basra, Arabia (Mecca, Yamama)
Salih b. Musarrih[6]	Imruʾ al-Qays b. Zayd Manat/Tamim	Safar 76-Jumada I 76/695	110	Jazira (Tigris)

Shabib b. Yazid b. Nuʿaym	Murra b. Hamam/Dhuhl b. Shayban/Bakr b. Waʾil/Mudar	Jumada I 76-end 77/695-697	70-90>160>600	Jazira (Tigris), Kufa, Jukha, Jibal, Ahwaz
Qatari b. al-Fujaʾa[7] (Azariqa)	Banu Kabiya b. Hurqus b. Mazin/Tamim/Mudar	77 or 78-78/697-698		Kirman, Tabaristan
(*mawali* Azariqa)	*mawali*	77 or 78/697-698		Kirman
ʿUbayda/ʿAbida b. Hilal (Azariqa)	Yashkur/Bakr b. Waʾil/Mudar	78/698-699		Tabaristan
(Kharijites of Sistan)[8]		70s/690s		Sistan
Human b. ʿAdi al-Sadusi	Shayban/Bakr b. Waʾil/Mudar	-82/-701		Sistan
Abu Khalada		86/705		Sistan
Shawdhab, i.e. Bistam b. Murri al-Yashkuri[9]	Yashkur/Bakr b. Waʾil/Mudar	100-101/718-720	80/300/600	Jazira, Jukha
(Kharijites of Sistan)		107-/725-726-		Sistan
(Kharijites of Sistan)		111-116/729-735		Sistan
Wazir al-Sakhtiyani		119/737	13	Kufa
Bahlul b. Bishr	Shayban/Bakr b. Waʾil/Mudar	119/737	(small)	Jazira (Mosul), Kufa
Suhari b. Shabib	Dhuhl b. Shayban/Bakr b. Waʾil/Mudar (son of the famous Kharijite Shabib b. Yazid)	119/737	30	Jukha, Ahwaz
(Ibadis/Kharijites (?) of North Africa)	Berber	122-125/739-743		North Africa
Saʿid b. Bahdal	Shayban/Bakr b. Waʾil/Mudar	after Walid II's death (d. 126/744)		Jazira, Kufa

(*continued*)

Table 23.1 Cont.

Leader	*Leader's tribal background*	*Date*	*Size of revolt*	*Region(s)*
Bistam b. Layth al-Thaʿlabi	Shayban/Bakr b. Waʾil/ Mudar	126-128/743-746	40> 200	Azerbaijan, Jazira, Jibal
al-Dahhak b. Qays al-Shaybani	Shayban/Bakr b. Waʾil/ Mudar	127-128/744-746	thousands>12,000> 40,000>120,000	Jazira (Mosul), Kufa
('Sufriyya' of Shahrazur)				Jibal
Shayban b. ʿAbd al-ʿAziz, i.e. Shayban al-Saghir	Yashkur/Bakr b. Waʾil/ Mudar	128-134/745-751	40,000	Jazira (Mosul), Jibal, Ahwaz, Fars, Sistan, Arabia (ʿUman)
ʿAbd Allah b. Yahya (Talib al-Haqq)	Banu Shaytan/Kinda/ Yemen ((proto-)Ibadi)	129-130/746-748	1,000	Arabia (Mecca, Hadramawt, Sanʿaʾ)

1 His following apparently comprised mostly *mawali*.
2 There were *mawali* among the rebels.
3 The majority of their following were Tamimi tribesmen.
4 Joined by many locals.
5 Large *mawali* following among this group of Azraqi Kharijites.
6 Interestingly, his following consisted mostly of tribesmen from Banu Shayban/Bakr b. Waʾil.
7 Qatari was deposed by the *mawali* among the Azariqa. He took the Arab Azraqis to Tabaristan, where he was killed. His men, now under ʿUbayda b. Hilal, were besieged and destroyed.
8 Kharijites conquered Sistan during the governorship of Yazid b. ʿArif al-Hamdani (107–8/725–27).
9 His following comprised Yashkuri and Shaybani (i.e. Bakri) horsemen.

Note: this overview is based on the main primary sources for early Islamic history as well as the *Taʾrikh-e Sistan*. Where possible, names and dates have been checked against the *EI2* and *EI3*; where the sources give different names/dates/locations, we have usually adopted the relevant information given by the latter two works. Other than the revolt of Talib al-Haqq, who is commonly identified as a proto-Ibadi, rebellions led by (allegedly) early Ibadi figures are not included in the list. The figures in the 'size of revolt' column should be read as follows: 'x-y' means the sources claim a revolt consisted of between x and y number of rebels; x>y means that the size of a revolt reportedly changed from x to y number of rebels; x/y means that different sources give diverging numbers.

NOTES

1 This chapter is part of the research conducted within the framework of the European Research Council project 'The Early Islamic Empire at Work – The View from the Regions Toward the Center' (2014–19; advanced grant no. 340362) directed by Stefan Heidemann at Universität Hamburg.
2 Al-Shahrastani 1961: I, 114.
3 See for example Kenney 2006; Timani 2007.
4 Foss 2007.
5 The term appears in poetry attributed to Kharijites of the Azraqi subdivision. See for example ʿAbbas 1974, 105–6, 125.
6 The concept of selling oneself for the sake of God finds expression for example in Qurʾan 9:46; 9:83; and particularly 9:111.
7 On Umayyad and Kharijite poetry sharing the same 'nexus of ideas' of selling oneself to God, see Marsham 2009: 102. See also al-Jomaih 1988: 364–5. For 'Kharijite' ideas expressed by non-Kharijites more generally, see Hagemann (forthcoming): chapter three.
8 See for example al-Jawhari's (1979: 1554) definition of *mariqa*: 'the Kharijites are called *mariqa*, from (the Prophet's) saying 'they stray (*yamruquna*) from the religion like an arrow strays (*yamruqu*) from a game animal.' See also al-Baladhuri 2003: II, 334; al-Tabari 1879–1901: I, 3388; Ibn Aʿtham 1968–75: IV, 105–6, 128.
9 A significant exception to this tendency is the anonymous *Tarikh-e Sistan*, which portrays the Khawarij as pious warriors, ascetics, noblemen, and fighters against injustice and corruption. See Gold 1976: for example 87–8, 116, 123–5, 130–5, 140. See also Meisami 1999: 113–15, 133.
10 On the problematic nature of the early Islamic tradition, see for example Leder 1992; Noth and Conrad 1994; Beaumont 1996; Robinson 2003.
11 On this, see also Gaiser 2009.
12 We will not discuss Ibadism in great detail. Ibadism developed into an actual, distinct movement with its own doctrines and political views, but only from the last decades of the Umayyad period onwards, resulting in the establishment of polities in the Maghrib, Oman and Yemen. Interest in this group has increased significantly over the past few decades. Scholarly studies of Ibadi history and thought are now quite numerous. See for example Rebstock 1983; Francesca 2003; Wilkinson 2010; Gaiser 2010a; Hoffman 2012; Ziaka 2014; Francesca 2015. For a comprehensive bibliography of Ibadi studies, see the revised and enlarged edition of *Al-Ibadiyya: A Bibliography* (Custers 2016).
13 See for example Atfayyish 1980.
14 For (medieval and modern) Ibadi assessments of Kharijism, see Hoffman 2014; Crone and Zimmerman 2001.
15 Crone 1998.
16 Gaiser 2014 and 2016.
17 Cook 1981: 51–67.
18 See for example Gabrieli 1973; Jayyusi 1983: 387–432, 413–14; Hallaq 1988; Badawi 1990: 146–66, 149.
19 See for example O. Rescher's translation of the chapter on Kharijites from al-Mubarrad's *Kamil* (Rescher 1922).
20 For Abu Hamza's sermon and the works that transmitted it, see Crone and Hinds 1986: 12, 129–32; Dähne 1998; Dähne 2001: 17.
21 ʿAbbas 1974; Maʿruf 1983.
22 For an overview of Kharijite coins, see Walker 1941: 111–13; Mochiri 1986; Wurtzel 1978; Gaiser 2010b.

23 For the last method, see Mochiri 1986 (however, most of his conclusions have not been accepted among numismatists).
24 Madelung 1988: 56–7; Gaiser 2010b: 174–5.
25 Gaiser 2010b: 180–2.
26 Gaiser 2010b.
27 Gaiser 2009: 1382.
28 Album 2011: 24 no. 11.
29 On this, see Bates 2000.
30 Gaiser 2010b: 169, 179–80; see Walker 1941: 111–12.
31 Gaiser 2010b: 171, 175–6, 180, 182.
32 Crone 2004: 28–9.
33 The following overview, unless stated otherwise, is based on the main primary sources for early Islamic history as well as the *Tarikh-e Sistan*. For the wider political context, Kennedy 2016 and Hawting 1986 still provide the most accessible surveys of Umayyad history. See also Marsham (forthcoming).
34 That is, one of the above-mentioned terms related to Kharijites (*khariji*, *haruri*, *shari*, and so on) is used by the sources to refer to (the leader of) these rebels.
35 Wellhausen 1901.
36 Crone 2004: 54.
37 Hawting 1978: 460–3.
38 Robinson 2000: 111.
39 Al-Baladhuri 2003: 424–9.
40 Specifically, in the Shahrazur-Masabadhan area, nowadays in Iraqi Kurdistan, between Halabja and Sulaymaniyya.
41 Al-Tabari 1879–1901: II, 10; al-Baladhuri 1979: IV/1, 163–4; al-Yaʿqubi 1960: II, 217.
42 See e.g. al-Yaʿqubi 1960: II, 221–2; Ibn Khayyat 1967–68: I, 246; al-Tabari 1879–1901: II, 28–9.
43 Among the more well-known Basran Kharijite revolts is that of al-Khatim and Sahm b. Ghalib, who rebelled in 666–7 CE. Both were eventually executed. Al-Tabari 1879–1901: II, 83–4; Ibn Khayyat 1967–68: I, 235, 241, 246; al-Baladhuri 1979: IV/1, 172–3. Al-Tabari also transmits a variant account that places this revolt five years earlier (II, 15–16).
44 Eight 'northerners' (Mudar: one from Asad, two from Qays, three from Tamim and allies; Rabiʿa: two from Bakr b. Waʾil) vs. four Yemenis, in addition to two *mawali* leaders and one of unidentified background. On the tribal affiliations of Kharijites and (proto-) Ibadis, see also Wellhausen 1902: 242; Watt 1973: 37; Wilkinson 2010: 157–60; Gaiser 2016: 118.
45 For a study of the topoi in reports on the early Kharijites' election of their leaders, see Hagemann (forthcoming): chapter three.
46 On Abu Bilal, see Gaiser 2014 and 2016; Hagemann (forthcoming): chapter five.
47 Ibn Khayyat 1967–68: I, 248; al-Tabari 1879–1901: II, 425–6, 513–16, 529; al-Baladhuri 1979: IV/1, 394–5, and al-Baladhuri 2001: IV/2, 372–3, 455.
48 *EI2*, 'Nadjadāt' (R. Rubinacci).
49 *EI3*, 'Azāriqa' (Keith Lewinstein).
50 These numbers should not be taken at face value, but they do give an impression of the scale of the revolts.
51 Madelung 1988: 56–7; Gaiser 2010b: 174–5.
52 Bacharach 2010: 9–14.
53 Robinson 2000: 125.
54 It is unclear how precisely Salih and Shabib are connected, if at all. See Robinson 2000: 117–19.

55 Robinson 2000: 125. For an in-depth study of Kharijism in the Jazira in this period, see Robinson 2000: 109–26.
56 See the *Tarikh-e Sistan* (1935) and Bosworth 1968 for an overview of the activities of the Kharijites in Sistan.
57 *Tarikh-e Sistan* 1935: 138/Gold 1976: 90; Ibn al-Athir 1997: III, 483.
58 *EI2*, 'al-Ḍaḥḥāḳ b. Ḳays al-Shaybani' (L. Veccia Vaglieri); Wellhausen 1901: 49–51.
59 *EI2*, 'Ṭalib al-Ḥaḳḳ' (E. Francesca); Hoffman 2012: 13. Gaiser 2016: 117, places the death of Talib al-Haqq's Omani successor in the year 751.
60 Abun-Nasr 1987: 37–9.
61 Blankinship 1994: 204–6.
62 On the issue of differentiating Ibadis and Sufris, and the problematic category of the 'Sufriyya', see Wilkinson 2010: 165, 167; Lewinstein 1992.
63 Gaiser 2016: 118–19.
64 For the Rustamids in North Africa (r. 778–909), see *EI2*, 'Rustamids' (M. Talbi); for the Ibadi imamates in Oman, see al-Rawas 2000.
65 For primary heresiographical treatments of the Khawarij, see al-Ashʿari 1963: I, 86–131; al-Baghdadi 1977: 54–92; al-Shahrastani 1961: 114–38. See also the English translations of al-Shahrastani's *Kitab al-Milal wa-l-nihal* (Kazi and Flynn 1984) and al-Baghdadi's *al-Farq bayna l-firaq* (Seelye 1920: I, 74–115). For modern analyses, see, for example, Watt 1973: 9–37; Dabashi 1989: 121–45; Kenney 1991; Lewinstein 1991, 1992 and 1994; Crone 2004: 54–64.
66 See for example Lewis 1953; Watt 1971; Kenney 1991; Lewinstein 1992; Knysh 1993.
67 Noted for example by Cook 1981: 64. See also Lewinstein 1992: 75–96, who shows that the 'subdivision' of the Sufriyya is essentially an umbrella category for those alleged Kharijites whose precise sectarian affiliation is undetermined.
68 Watt 1973: 20, 28, 75.
69 Van Ess 1991: 38; Watt 1973: 23, 25. See also Hawting 1978.
70 See for example al-Baladhuri 2003: 317–19, 446.
71 Robinson 2000: 111.
72 Watt 1973: 14–15.
73 Watt 1973: 20–1; Madelung 1988: 71; Hagemann (forthcoming): chapters two and six.
74 Hagemann (forthcoming): chapters two and five.
75 On the concept of emigration (*hijra*) in the early Islamic Near East, see Crone 1994a.
76 Watt 1973: 15, 22, 24. However, Lewinstein 1991 argues for a more complex picture, positing that the group was initially also accused of being too lenient (morally and legally) with its own followers, but that this charge had mostly disappeared from the tradition by the early tenth century, when the 'mainstream' heresiographers began to compose their works.
77 See Hagemann (forthcoming): chapters two and five, 205–12, and the references there. See also the various entries in the second and third edition of the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*: for example, 'Azariqa' (Keith Lewinstein); 'Nadjadat' (R. Rubinacci); 'Sufriyya'(Keith Lewinstein and Wilferd Madelung); 'al-Ibadiyya' (T. Lewicki); 'Abu Fudayk' (Keith Lewinstein); 'Abu Bayhas' (Keith Lewinstein).
78 Watt 1973: 23–5; Schwartz 1980: 71. For a similar process among the Ibadiyya of North Africa, see Schwartz 1983: 62.
79 Kenney 2006: 34.
80 Watt 1973: 25–33.
81 On Kharijism in the Abbasid period, see Vaglieri 1949; Watt 1977.
82 Watt 1973: 36–7; Donner 1998: 108. However, as stated above, most leaders of early Kharijite rebellions were Arab tribesmen rather than *mawali*. See also Crone 1994b.
83 Kenney 2006: 33.

84 Kenney 2006: 32–3.
85 Kenney 2006: 32.
86 Crone 1998.
87 Van Ess 1991: 198–9.
88 Crone 2000: 86–7.
89 For example, al-Muqaddasi (1906: 306, 323, 469) reports communities of Kharijites in a number of towns in Sistan, Khurasan and Kirman.
90 See for example Gabrieli 1943; Khalidi 2002; al-Qadi 1994; Higgins 2005.
91 See for example Lewinstein 1991, 1992, and 1994; Crone 1998; Kenney 1991; Pampus 1977.
92 Brünnow 1884.
93 Brünnow 1884; Wellhausen 1901; Pampus 1980 (who also mentions the influence of socio-economic factors). Hawting 1978 takes a rather different approach to the question of Kharijite beliefs and relates the *la hukma* slogan to similar processes within Jewish communities arguing over the use of oral law vis-a-vis the Scripture.
94 Hinds 1971; Shaban 1971; Kenney 1989.
95 Watt 1961: 217; Watt 1973: 11–12, 20; Robinson 2000: 109–26.
96 Watt 1973: 36–7. See Dabashi 1989: 135 for a critique of Watt's argument.
97 Bosworth 1968: 38.
98 See the remarks in Dabashi 1989: 138.
99 Donner 1997.
100 Sizgorich 2009: 196–230, where he also notes some resemblance between (stories about) Christian and Muslim forms of violent piety and martyrdom; el-Hibri 2010: 237–8, 246–9; Gaiser 2016 (who further develops Sizgorich's comparative analysis of Christian and (Kharijite) Muslim martyrdom narratives).
101 For such tropes in general, see Noth and Conrad 1994. For their appearance in reports of Kharijism, see Hagemann (forthcoming): chapter one.
102 Hagemann (forthcoming). For the use of Kharijite precedent in Islamic legal discourse, see Abou el Fadl 2001.
103 One obscure reference to 'khawarij' in Egypt is attributed to ʿAli b. Abi Talib as he returns from Siffin (al-Tabari 1879–1901: I, 3392–3), but there is nothing to indicate that these Egyptian rebels have anything in common with ʿAli's Kharijite opponents in Iraq.
104 There are reports of a North African revolt that had spilled over to reach the Iberian Peninsula around the year 740, but Kharijism does not appear to have been an indigenous Andalusi phenomenon. See Gaiser 2016: 119.

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CHAPTER TWENTY FOUR

QURASHI MARRIAGE AND THE ROOTS OF REVOLT

The rebellion of ʿAbd Allah b. Muʿawiya, 744–747[1]

Majied Robinson

ʿAbd Allah b. Muʿawiya's rebellion was in many respects a precursor to the 'Abbasid Revolution' of 747–50 that toppled the Umayyad dynasty.[2] ʿAbd Allah b. Muʿawiya's revolt began in 744 in the restless Iraqi city of Kufa during a time of caliphal discord and it was led by a man claiming to be a closer relation of Muhammad than the incumbent Umayyad ruling family. However, it was short-lived; just three years later, in 747, Ibn Muʿawiya's army was defeated by the Umayyads, and although the leader escaped he was soon captured by a rival opponent of the Umayyads, Abu Muslim, in Herat. Ibn Muʿawiya then disappears into prison and this is the last we ever hear of him. In contrast, Abu Muslim's revolt came to be remembered as the 'Abbasid Revolution' – the rebellion that overthrew the Umayyads in 750 and installed the Abbasid caliphs in their place.

In its scale, and in its Hashimite ideological orientation, Ibn Muʿawiya's rebellion anticipated the Abbasid Revolution. Rather than being a local affair it left Kufa and established itself across Iran's Western provinces where governors were appointed and coins were struck. But the rebellion was also distinctive in a number of respects. Its supporters were not just the usual Hashimite or Kharijite suspects; Ibn Muʿawiya was backed by a diverse array of high-profile figures. Famously, these included a future Abbasid caliph, and other members of the Abbasid family, but there were also Arab tribal chiefs and even members of the Umayyad family. Not only this, in terms of both his genealogy and personal history Ibn Muʿawiya does not seem to fit the rebel mould; he was not a close relative of any prominent religious or political figures and prior to the rebellion he is almost completely absent from our sources. Furthermore, it is notable that the rebellion left its own political legacy; centuries after Ibn Muʿawiya's death clandestine groups were still operating in his name.

According to the assessment of most modern historians Ibn Muʿawiya's emergence as the rebellion's leader was something of an accident. The diversity of his support and the rapid expansion of the movement are explained as being products of the widespread hostility to the Umayyads in this period and had little to do with him personally. Ibn Muʿawiya was simply in the right place at the right time.[3] However, an alternative explanation which makes more sense of the longer-term political dynamics in the Umayyad Empire is proposed here.

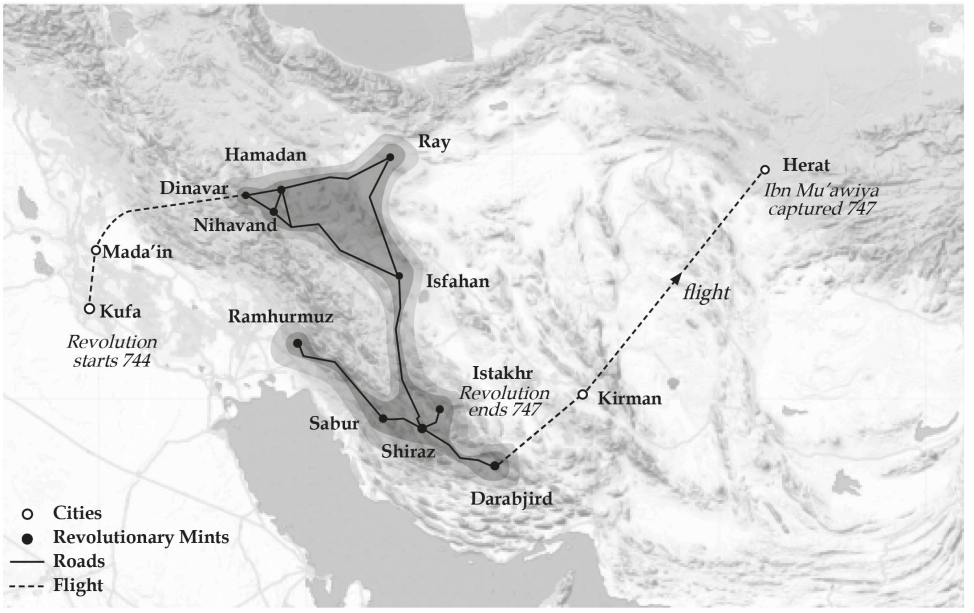

Figure 24.1 Map of the rebellion of Ibn Muʿawiya. The filled circles on the map indicate locations where coins were struck by mints loyal to Ibn Muʿawiya, after Bernheimer 2006. The shaded areas between them follow the lines of the main roads between the cities, following Le Strange 1966, and represent the height of Ibn Muʿawiya's power. Graphic design by Andrew Meehan.

By placing the marriages made by Ibn Muʿawiya's ancestors in a statistical context it will be shown that these unions mirror the diversity of the rebellion's supporters. The foundations of this revolt are therefore not merely Iraqi unrest and Umayyad dynastic division in the middle of the eighth century but political alliances being made some 50 years earlier.

In what follows, the process of statistical analysis is demonstrated, in order to demystify statistical approaches and to encourage other scholars to use data-led approaches. With specific reference to the history of early Islam, the demonstration will support the contention that by defining marriage as a political act we can widen our analytical scope to include periods where we would otherwise have no historiographical material to work with.

METHODOLOGY

Our methodological starting points are the claims that the Arabic historical tradition's records of the marriages between free people of Arabian heritage are accurate and that they represent political acts of association and alliance. (Unions with slave women, as opposed to free women, are also accurately recorded, but are not pertinent to the analysis here because they lacked this political dimension.[4]) The accuracy of the marriage records is shown elsewhere, in publications showing how statistically observed patterns in marriage behaviour mirror social change amongst the Quraysh

in the sixth–eighth centuries CE.[5] That marriage was a political act is a fairly obvious point; among a plethora of examples we can point to Ibn Muʿawiya himself whose first act upon taking over Kufa is to marry the daughter of a local Arab tribal chief.[6]

However, without further context, these two claims are far too general to be useful when studying particular phenomena or individuals. If a Hashimite – for instance – marries a non-Hashimite, should this be read as a political statement of turning their back on their clan? We cannot know without understanding how this marriage fits in with marriage patterns more generally. As a starting point we need to know how frequently this person's Hashimite peer group married outside the clan, and indeed what constitutes a peer group. Moving beyond this group we would also want to know how this compares to the marriage behaviour of other clans, and whether or not this changes according to geography or time.

We therefore need to start thinking about groups, the study of which is prosopography. What this means in practice is that the researcher will select a cohort of individuals and collect biographical information on them. They will then seek out previously unnoticed commonalities within these biographies and then link these common traits to the wider socio-political context of the period. The cohort can either be an identification the subjects would have recognised themselves (for example, early converts to Islam) or something apparent only from a position of hindsight (for example, the grandfathers of caliphs).

The size of the cohort influences the methods used to study them. In a *small group study*,[7] a researcher typically begins with the selection of a few individuals linked through their membership of an organisation or their co-operation in a particular historical event. They will then set about collecting material on them from a variety of sources, aiming for comprehensive coverage. In early Islamic history, the small group study *par excellence* is Asad Ahmed's 2011 monograph *The Religious Elite of the Early Islamic Hijaz* where he selects five individuals from the *shura* council that elected ʿUthman as the third caliph and follows the fortunes of their descendants over the later generations.

This small group study has two constraints. The first is that there is a limit to how big the cohort can get before the ever increasing amount of information renders the whole project unmanageable; as Ahmed candidly puts it in the introduction to *The Religious Elite*, 'This book was not easy to write; and it is not easy to read'.[8] The second is that there may be large cohorts of individuals for whom we have very little further information besides their name and a single relationship to a geographical location, an occupation or another individual. Adding layers of source material is impossible if there are no further source materials to add.

In cases like these a prosopographer will use methodologies that are more quantitative than qualitative. We will refer to approaches of this sort as *mass-data analysis*. Studies in this category will typically reduce the number of sources analysed and reduce the number of questions asked of them while increasing the number of subjects from the dozens of individuals to the hundreds or thousands.[9] The best-known example of this in the historical study of early Islam is Richard Bulliet's 1979 work *Conversion to Islam in the Medieval Period*. Bulliet extracts 469 patrilines from Iranian biographical dictionaries and uses the naming patterns to indicate the rate of conversion to Islam in the seventh to tenth centuries. More recent work has included that of: Said Saleh Agha (who has quantitatively analysed the background

of the leaders of the 'Abbasid Revolution);[10] Maxim Romanov (particularly his analysis of 30,000 *nisba*s in al-Dhahabi's *The History of Islam*);[11] and two publications by the author, which look at trends in the maternal origins of hundreds of Qurashis living in the period 500–750 CE.[12]

This mass-data approach has its own shortcomings. The use of fewer sources means there is a risk that the findings are weakly grounded; asking the same questions of different material may lead to new answers. Not only this, but the unfamiliarity of statistical approaches amongst Humanities academics more generally leads to problems of misinterpretation of findings, which has dogged Bulliet's study in particular.[13]

The following investigation will show that despite these shortcomings prosopography is useful for both literary and positivist historical analysis of early Islamic source material. By creating comprehensive databases of marriage behaviour we will be able to use a seemingly unusual marriage as a starting point for a wider discussion of group behaviour which will ultimately link the fortunes of Ibn Muʿawiya in Kufa and Iran to the actions of his grandfather in the Hijaz a few decades earlier.

THE FAMILY BACKGROUND

With our methodological principles and database in place we are now in a position to use marriage as a means of casting light on the pre-revolutionary political aspirations of Ibn Muʿawiya's family. We do this by looking in the data and our source material for anomalies; marriage behaviour that makes this family stand out from their peers. It is by investigating these anomalies that we can build an analytical framework for understanding the rebellion of 744.

It is important to state at the outset that there are no hard and fast rules on what constitutes an anomaly; data-led approaches do not give us rubrics of standard behaviour which can be used to quickly and simply highlight points of interest. The sources we are dealing with are old and complicated and must be handled on their own terms. At this initial stage we can do no better than simply reading about the marriages made by Ibn Muʿawiya's family to see if anything strikes us as unusual.

Ibn Mu'awiya's family is here judged to encompass Jaʿfar b. Abi Talib and his descendants.[14] The starting point for the investigation of their marriages is al-Zubayri's *Nasab Quraysh*. This is because it is an outstanding source of marriage data and so forms the basis for the bulk of the statistical analysis that follows. It is also an early source; the extant recension was probably composed in the 830s (this is based on the fact that the last caliph I have found named in the book is al-Muʿtasim (r. 833–42), and that Samarra (founded 836) is not mentioned). Al-Zubayri himself is recorded as having died in either 848 or 851.[15]

Within this section, one marriage in particular stands out. This is the marriage of Ibn Muʿawiya's paternal aunt, Umm Kulthum bt. ʿAbd Allah,[16] to al-Hajjaj b. Yusuf which is reported in the following way:

> Al-Hajjaj b. Yusuf married her when he was the emir of Medina and Mecca. ʿAbd al-Malik wrote to him ordering him to separate from her, so he divorced her.[17]

This is intriguing for three main reasons. First, it is a marriage between a Qurashi woman and a non-Qurashi man (al-Hajjaj was from the tribe of Thaqif); exogamous marriages of this sort were very rare. Second, al-Hajjaj was an unwaveringly loyal in his service to ʿAbd al-Malik which makes it hard to understand why the Hashimites would allow one of their women to marry him. After all, this marriage would have taken place after the Umayyad massacre of Hashimites at Karbala where two of the victims were Umm Kulthum's brothers. It also took place shortly after the Umayyad defeat of Ibn al-Zubayr whose caliphate had been supported by Umm Kulthum's father. Third, the marriage seems to have displeased ʿAbd al-Malik who took the very unusual step breaking it up. To make such a high-profile intervention would indicate that al-Hajjaj had made a very serious mistake by participating in this union.

The incident appears in numerous other accounts, most of which focus on the outrage provoked by the marriage. Al-Zubayri's student al-Baladhuri (d. before *c.* 892)[18] provides two versions of events in his *Ansab al-ashraf*.[19] In the first – which is attributed to 'some Basrans who were with ʿAli b. ʿAbd Allah (b. al-ʿAbbas b. Jaʿfar)', but otherwise looks very similar to al-Zubayri's account – he tells us that:

> And then al-Hajjaj (married her), and ʿAbd al-Malik wrote to him and scolded him for his audacity in making this marriage, so he divorced her and al-Qasim b. Muhammad married her.[20]

The second account offers a very different version of events and claims the marriage was ended by the bride's father because it would embarrass his family. It is told via Abu al-Hasan al-Madaʾini (d. 843) who heard from Ghassan b. ʿAbd al-Hamid:

> ʿAbd Allah b. Jaʿfar wanted to make a marriage with al-Hajjaj, and he sent (a letter) to ʿUmar b. ʿAli b. Abi Talib: You must attend so that you will marry him (al-Hajjaj to Umm Kulthum), and ʿUmar wrote back: Postpone this until the evening because I would hate it if the people of the mosque of the Messenger of God saw me marry al-Hajjaj. (ʿAbd Allah) wrote back to him saying that he would not let allow anyone to be ashamed of it (the marriage), and if it was to cause shame he would not go ahead with the marriage. He (the narrator) said: ʿUmar was possessed of both wisdom and nobility.

References to the marriage continue to appear in later centuries and most continue to repeat the reason of mismatched lineage as being the cause of ʿAbd al-Malik's ire.[21] But in some of these sources there is an alternative explanation for the caliph's behaviour; that the marriage was not seen as morally outrageous but was regarded as a direct political threat to Umayyad authority.

This version of events can be found in *al-Kamil* of al-Mubarrad (d. 898), *al-ʿIqd* of Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih (d. 940) and the *Taʾrikh Madinat Dimashq* of Ibn ʿAsakir (d. 1176).[22] The latter of these provides no fewer than three versions of what happened, and taken together they represent quite well what the historiographical tradition as a

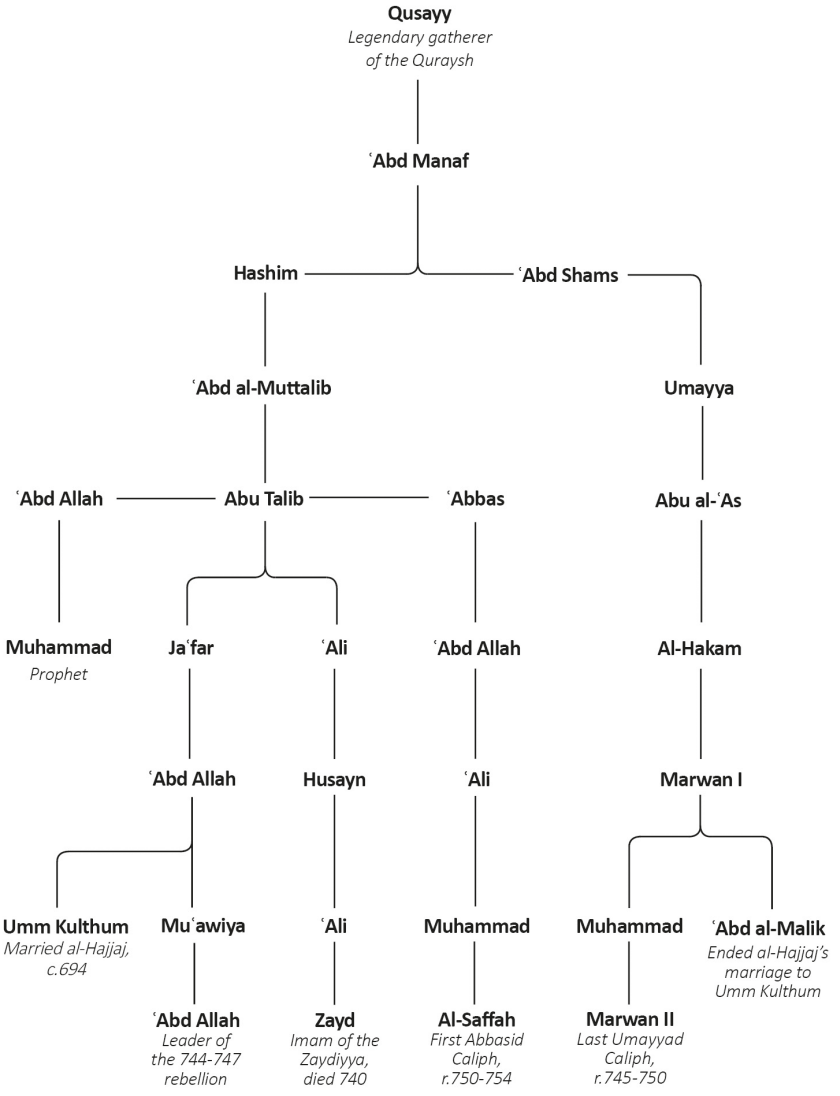

Figure 24.2 Family tree of Ibn Muʿāwiya and other principal actors. Graphic design by Andrew Meehan.

whole thought of the marriage. The first one focuses on the shame element, and does this in a decidedly humorous fashion:

> (It is said) of ʿAbd Allah b. Jaʿfar that he married his daughter to al-Hajjaj b. Yusuf, and he told her: 'When he penetrates you say:
>
> "There is no God but God, the Clement and Wise. Glory to God of the Mighty Throne. Praise be to God, Lord of the Two Worlds." '
>
> It is claimed that the Prophet used to say these words if something caused him distress.

The second narrative is a bit ambiguous depending on the way verb *yasil* is interpreted; it could indicate that the betrothal never happened, but it more likely refers to the betrothal being annulled before the marriage:

> Hammad said: I thought he said: He (al-Hajjaj) never joined her (*lam yasil ilayha*).

Ibn ʿAsakir's third account is where we are given the political dimension for the divorce in a version of events similar to those found in the works of al-Mubarrad and Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih. In this strand, the marriage is ended by ʿAbd al-Malik because he fears an alliance developing between al-Hajjaj and the family of Umm Kulthum. The following conversation takes place between the caliph ʿAbd al-Malik and the son of a previous caliph, Khalid b. Yazid b. Muʿawiya. At the time, Khalid b. Yazid was married to the sister of Ibn al-Zubayr, whose counter-caliphate had been toppled by the Umayyads after a decade of conflict. The account goes:

> Muhammad b. Idris al-Shafiʿi said: When al-Hajjaj b. Yusuf married the daughter of ʿAbd Allah b. Jaʿfar, Khalid b. Yazid b. Muʿawiya told ʿAbd al-Malik:
> 'Have you allowed al-Hajjaj to marry the daughter of ʿAbd Allah b. Jaʿfar?'
> ʿAbd al-Malik answered:
> 'Yes, and what is wrong with that?'
> Khalid b. Yazid said:
> 'There is great wrong in it, by God!'
> ʿAbd al-Malik asked:
> 'How so?'
> Khalid b. Yazid said:
> 'By God, O Commander of the Faithful, ever since I married Ramla bt. al-Zubayr, all the enmity I felt towards Ibn al-Zubayr has left me.'
> He said: Then it was as if ʿAbd al-Malik had been sleeping and all of a sudden awakened. He said: ʿAbd al-Malik wrote to al-Hajjaj ordering him to divorce her and he did so.

Here there is no mention of social outrage over a Hashimite marrying a non-Qurashi. The affair here is understood in political terms, and most probably geopolitical terms; al-Hajjaj's tribe controlled the self-sufficient walled town of al-Taʾif, which lay a day's travel from Mecca. Umm Kulthum's family meanwhile were firmly established in Medina, which lay between Damascus and Mecca. This sort of alliance would have loosened ʿAbd al-Malik's grip on the Hijaz, which until recently had been under the control of Ibn al-Zubayr. Although the details of the conversation can only be assumed to be fictional, underlying this report is a plausible historical memory that the termination of the al-Hajjaj marriage was in response to a credible political threat to Umayyad power.

This latter explanation is very helpful for us in understanding the later revolt of 744 as it shows that the family had a long-standing interest in politics; Ibn Muʿawiya was not made leader for being in the right place at the right time, but because he was benefiting from efforts to establish familial networks by previous generations, of which the marriage of his aunt to al-Hajjaj was just one (albeit brief and unsuccessful) example.

ʿABD ALLAH B. JAʿFAR THE POLITICIAN

There is a problem with the political explanation for the marriage of Umm Kulthum to al-Hajjaj though – and that is with the character of Umm Kulthum's father. Although ʿAbd Allah b. Jaʿfar's heritage was first rate in genealogical terms (his father Jaʿfar was the older brother of ʿAli b. Abi Talib, had been part of the first emigration to Abyssinia and was later martyred).[23] ʿAbd Allah himself does not seem to capitalise on this and is awarded no political appointments, participates in no battles, and instigates no uprisings. His chief claims to fame are his loyalty to the Umayyad regime and the rewards he received for this, particularly in the Sufyanid period when Muʿawiya paid him an annual stipend of a million dirhams, a stipend that was doubled by Muʿawiya's son Yazid when he came to power in 680.

The secondary studies do not challenge the political insignificance of ʿAbd Allah b. Jaʿfar.[24] In Madelung's interpretation, ʿAbd Allah's apoliticism is seen as a positive, and is stood in contrast to the more hot-headed Hashimites around him (this includes his own sons, two of whom were killed at Karbala). As for the sum of money received from Muʿawiya, he says that the caliph undertook this only because he was safe in the knowledge that the generous ʿAbd Allah would not hoard this wealth but distribute it amongst the Quraysh of Medina.

Madelung counters the notion that ʿAbd Allah b. Jaʿfar was an Umayyad stooge, despite his being the recipient of such a generous sum of money, by citing the circumstances of Umm Kulthum's first marriage. In this story, Muʿawiya intends to have Umm Kulthum married off to his son Yazid, but ʿAbd Allah b. Jaʿfar forestalls the betrothal by asking Husayn b. ʿAli b. Abi Talib (who was his first cousin and Umm Kulthum's maternal uncle) to exercise his marriage rights as a senior male member of the family. Husayn does this by marrying her off to one of her cousins. Turning to Umm Kulthum's later marriage to al-Hajjaj, Madelung takes the view that this was forced on ʿAbd Allah by the would-be husband, and ʿAbd al-Malik intervened because of the mismatch in lineage.[25]

Amir-Moezzi is less sympathetic. In his analysis ʿAbd Allah's acceptance and distribution of Muʿawiya's money is because 'the cunning caliph no doubt wished ʿAbdallah (and by extension, the Hashimites) to be seen as party-loving squanderers'. Amir-Moezzi does however argue that ʿAbd Allah was not completely apolitical; we are told that during the caliphate of ʿAli he influenced the appointment of his maternal half-brother Muhammad b. Abi Bakr to the governorship of Egypt (a tenure that did not go smoothly).

These short analyses are fair summaries of the narrative sources collated by Madelung and Amir-Moezzi. Their agreement that ʿAbd Allah b. Jaʿfar had little political relevance is a reasonable inference when our sources do not refer to him as having had any. Going back to the marriage of his daughter to al-Hajjaj, we would have to assume that he was bullied into it by the governor, and that his grandson's success in leading the 744 revolt had owed nothing to his politically ineffective ancestors.

This is where prosopography can help. We will begin by situating ʿAbd Allah b. Jaʿfar's marriage behaviour within a wider statistical context and through this show that he is an extreme outlier in certain data categories. We will then look at comparable outliers and show that they are almost all political heavyweights. This

will lead us to the conclusion that ʿAbd Allah b. Jaʿfar was neither Madelung's model of Shiʿi quietism, nor Amir-Moezzi's useful idiot for Umayyad interests. The prosopographical ʿAbd Allah b. Jaʿfar is in fact a deeply political animal, and the rebellion of his grandson should therefore be seen as a continuation of this family's machinations.

THE MARRIAGES OF ʿABD ALLAH B. JAʿFAR IN STATISTICAL CONTEXT

ʿAbd Allah b. Jaʿfar's marriage behaviour is a good starting point for marriage-based statistical study because he married so many women. The *Nasab Quraysh* of al-Zubayri records ʿAbd Allah b. Jaʿfar as marrying seven women who bore him 21 children; he also had three sons by an unspecified number of concubines (see Table 24.1).

In terms of taking concubines, ʿAbd Allah b. Jaʿfar's marriage behaviour is in keeping with the behaviour of his peers in the post-conquest milieu.[26] The two marriages he made with his cousins are also quite typical, and are useful for us in establishing his credentials as a full member of the Quraysh tribe.[27]

What does seem unusual however is the large number of children he produced and the large number of wives he took – particularly the five non-Qurashi wives. This inference can be tested by comparing ʿAbd Allah b. Jaʿfar's behaviour with those of his peers. To do this in a truly comprehensive fashion we would have to create a database comprising all marriages recorded in early Islamic literature. At present though we will rely on just one work, the aforementioned *Nasab Quraysh* (*Genealogy of*

Table 24.1 ʿAbd Allah b. Jaʿfar's wives.

Wife name	*Wife tribal affiliation*	*Number of children*	*Nasab Quraysh page reference*
Zaynab bt. ʿAli b. Abi Talib	ʿAlid	5	25, 41, 83, 241
Umm Kulthum bt. ʿAli b. Abi Talib	ʿAlid	0	25
Al-Nabigha bt. Khidash	ʿAbs b. Baghid of Ghatafan	1	83
Amina bt. ʿAbd Allah b. Kaʿb	Khathʿam	3	83
Bint al-Musayyab b. Najba	Fazara of Ghatafan	2	83
Bint Khasfa b. Thaqif	Bakr b. Waʾil[1]	4	83
Layla bt. Masʿud b. Khalid	Tamim[2]	6	83
Concubines	N/A	3	83

[1] There is a problem with the tribal affiliation here in the manuscript tradition of the *Nasab Quraysh* where a certain Bakr b. Waʾil is listed as Bint Khasfa's grandfather. This is certainly a copyist error where *bin* (son of) has been written in place of *min* (of). This error is highlighted by the editor of the critical edition in footnote 3 on page 83.

[2] The tribal affiliation of this woman is not given in the *Nasab Quraysh* but can be found in Ibn al-Kalbi 1988: 620.

the Quraysh) of al-Zubayri. This book, the extant manuscript versions of which are descended from a single recension most likely delivered by al-Zubayri in the 830s, contains data on nearly 2,000 marriages made by (predominantly Qurashi) Arabs, the bulk of which took place in the period 500–750 CE.[28]

Removing the concubines from this database, we are left with 1,572 marriages made by Qurashi men to named women, the overwhelming majority of whom were of Arabian origin.[29] These marriages were made by 1,001 men and 723 of these men are recorded as having only had one wife. Only 16 men had seven or more wives, which places ʿAbd Allah b. Jaʿfar in the top 2 per cent of men in terms of number of women married. In terms of numbers of children he also scores very highly; only four men are recorded as having produced more children, placing him in the top 1 per cent of the 814 men recorded as having produced at least one child by concubines or free women. In terms of exogamy he is also remarkable; only four men married more non-Qurashi women than he did.

Having highlighted the respects in which ʿAbd Allah b. Jaʿfar is unusual, we will compare him to his fellow outliers. Table 24.2 collates the names of men who married seven or more wives, or married five or more non-Qurashi women, or had more than 24 children. The table also suggests a political connection the individual had that may explain their presence.

From this, we can see that the majority of names are either caliphs, the fathers of caliphs, or the progenitors of major clans. Most are outliers in only one respect, and just one man is an outlier in the same three categories as ʿAbd Allah b. Jaʿfar and that is his uncle, ʿAli b. Abi Talib. Yet we should not think that this is due to some Hashimite peculiarity; only three Hashimites appear in the table and one of those is the Prophet. No other Hashimite of ʿAbd Allah b. Jaʿfar's generation – which includes the sons of ʿAli – married more women or married more non-Qurashi women than him. Of the 54 marriages made by Hashimite men of his generation, only 15 were exogamous meaning ʿAbd Allah b. Jaʿfar accounts for a full third of them. He is in all these respects a peculiarity.

THE MARRIAGES OF UMM KULTHUM BT. ʿABD ALLAH AND HER SIBLINGS

It is clear that ʿAbd Allah b. Jaʿfar is atypical in terms of his own marriage behaviour. This extends to the marriage behaviour of his children, for which he would have had much responsibility.[30] These are listed in Table 24.3.[31]

The marriages of these children look very different to those of the father: aside from Umm Kulthum's marriage to al-Hajjaj, there are no marriages made by these children to partners from outside the Quraysh tribe. Partly this is explained through the difference in gender; this cohort contains more women who marry far more endogomously than men. Qurashi men in general were also becoming more endogamous in this period when making full marriages.[32]

But although the marriages of ʿAbd Allah b. Jaʿfar's children fit the pattern of wider Qurashi endogamy in broad terms, what they do not reflect is emergence of clan endogamy within the tribe – a phenomenon established by Asad Ahmed's

Table 24.2 Other Qurashi outliers.

Name	*Outlier category*	*Political connection*
ʿAli b. ʿAbd Allah b. al-ʿAbbas	33 children	Grandfather of the first Abbasid caliphs
Al-Hakam b. Abi al-ʿAs b. Umayya	32 children	Father of caliph Marwan I
ʿAbd al-Rahman b. al-Harith	31 children	
ʿAli b. Abi Talib	27 children and 10 wives including 6 non-Qurashi wives	Caliph
Saʿid b. al-ʿAs b. Saʿid	12 wives including 8 non-Qurashi wives	Commander and governor of Kufa; son a candidate for caliphate[1]
ʿAbd al-Rahman b. ʿAwf	12 wives including 7 non-Qurashi wives	Commander and member of *shura*
ʿUbayd Allah b. al-ʿAbbas	6 non-Qurashi wives	
ʿAbd Shams b. ʿAbd Manaf	5 non-Qurashi wives	Father of Umayya and progenitor of ʿAbd Shams branch of Quraysh
Al-Muttalib b. ʿAbd Manaf	5 non-Qurashi wives	Progenitor of al-Muttalib branch of Quraysh
Hashim b. ʿAbd Manaf	6 non-Qurashi wives	Progenitor of Hashim branch of Quraysh
Abu Sufyan b. Harb b. Umayya	7 wives	Father of Muʿawiya I
Al-Zubayr b. al-ʿAwwam	7 wives	Father of a caliph, member of *shura* council
Al-Walid b. ʿAbd al-Malik	7 wives	Caliph
Sulayman b. ʿAbd al-Malik	7 wives	Caliph
ʿAbd Allah b. Khalid b. Asid (Umayyad)	7 wives	
ʿUmar b. al-Khattab	7 wives	Caliph
Asad b. ʿAbd al-ʿUzza b. Qusayy	8 wives	Progenitor of Asad branch of Quraysh
ʿUthman b. ʿAffan	8 wives	Caliph
Hisham b. ʿAbd al-Malik	8 wives	Caliph
Muhammd al-Nabi	9 wives	Prophet
ʿAbd al-Malik b. Marwan	10 wives	Caliph

[1] The genealogy for al-Ashdaq and his father Saʿid b. al-ʿAs as given in their respective *EI2* entries is incorrect; it should be: Saʿid b. al-ʿAs b. Saʿid b. al-ʿAs b. Umayya, not Saʿid b. al-ʿAs b. Umayya as stated in *EI2* ʿAmr b. Saʿid b. al-ʿAs b. Umayya al-Umawi, known as al-Ashdak' (K.V. Zettersteen) and *EI2* 'Saʿid b. al-ʿAs' (Bosworth).

Table 24.3 Spouses of ʿAbd Allah b. Jaʿfar's children.

Name of child	*Spouse name*	*Spouse affiliation*	*Nasab Quraysh page reference*
Umm Kulthum	Al-Qasim b. Muhammad b. Jaʿfar	Talibid	82–83
Umm Kulthum	Al-Hajjaj b. Yusuf	Thaqif	82–83
Umm Abiha	ʿAbd al-Malik b. Marwan	Marwanid	83
Umm Abiha	ʿAli b. ʿAbd Allah b. al-ʿAbbas	Abbasid	83
Umm Muhammad	Yazid b. Muʿawiya	Sufyanid	83
Muʿawiya	Fatima bt. al-Hasan b. al-Hasan b. ʿAli	Hasanid	52
ʿAli	Lubaba bt. ʿAbd Allah b. al-ʿAbbas	Abbasid	29

prosopographical studies.[33] Most notable in this regard are the two marriages made by his daughters to Umayyad men.

Considering this from a statistical perspective: of the 94 marriages made by Marwanid men recorded in the *Nasab Quraysh*, only six are made to Hashimite women; of the 54 Sufyanid male marriages only three are to descendants of Hashim. Given the hundreds of Hashimite women that would have been available to the Umayyad caliphs, the infrequency of unions of this type indicates that there is a clear marital boundary being expressed here between the two groups. But this boundary is not being observed in the marriages of two of Umm Kulthum's siblings, and her own betrothal to al-Hajjaj should be seen as an extension of this pattern.

Taken together, the marriages of ʿAbd Allah b. Jaʿfar and his children demonstrate distinctive diversity in terms of their partners. Both iterations of the Umayyad dynasty are represented, as are the forebears of the Abbasid dynasty, as are the descendants of ʿAli. In addition to this, ʿAbd Allah had marriage connections with tribes spanning the Arabian Peninsula, connecting Medina and Damascus with Kufa, which itself was the key to controlling Iraq (see Figure 24.4). This bonded him to the strongholds on either side of the Fertile Crescent, and many of the spaces in between. This prosopographical approach presents the family as not only politically aspirational but also creative; seemingly unable to secure political appointments, they marry their way to power. This long-term strategy comes to fruition in Kufa 744.

QURASHI FEMALE ENDOGAMY

His marriages, and those of his children, indicate that ʿAbd Allah b. Jaʿfar had political aspirations. Returning to the marriage of his daughter to al-Hajjaj, we would conclude that Ibn ʿAsakir's third report – that ʿAbd al-Malik feared a political union between Thaqif and Hashim (or between Taʾif and Medina) – is the one most reflective of the seventh-century context.

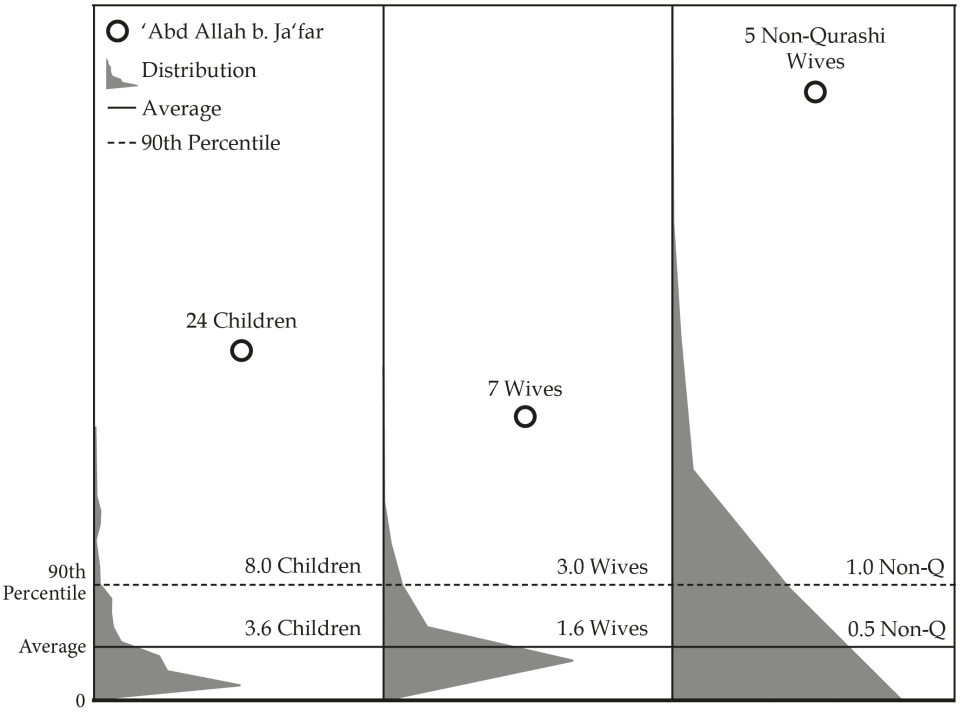

Figure 24.3 ʿAbd Allah b. Jaʿfar's outlier status.
Graphic design by Andrew Meehan.

As for the outrage this marriage caused, the prosopographical approach can question this by looking at female exogamy in a wider context, and through this we will see that although it was unusual for a Qurashi woman to marry a non-Qurashi man, it happened more often than the later historical sources seem prepared to admit.

The databases tell us that the *Nasab Quraysh* records a total of 1,105 marriages made by Qurashi women and only 71 of these marriages are made to men of non-Qurashi heritage.[34] The most obvious interpretation of this statistic is that the Quraysh were highly endogamous when it came to female marriage behaviour. We need to add a historiographical caveat though; the *Nasab Quraysh* was written by a Qurashi and is structured around the genealogy of the Qurashi family tree, and as such women who marry out of the tribe also exit the genealogical schema. Once a woman marries out, responsibility for remembering her marriage behaviour falls on the genealogists of the tribe she is marrying into, and because no other tribe recorded their marriage information at anything near the level of detail we find in the *Nasab Quraysh*, these women tend to disappear from the historiographical record. This means that it is very likely that the levels of exogamy were higher than the figure given above.

Despite this, the data can still be used to show that Qurashi female exogamy at the time of al-Hajjaj and Umm Kulthum was very low. We can establish this by looking at the data generationally in Table 24.4. The generations are numbered from that of Qusayy – when the first female married out of Quraysh.

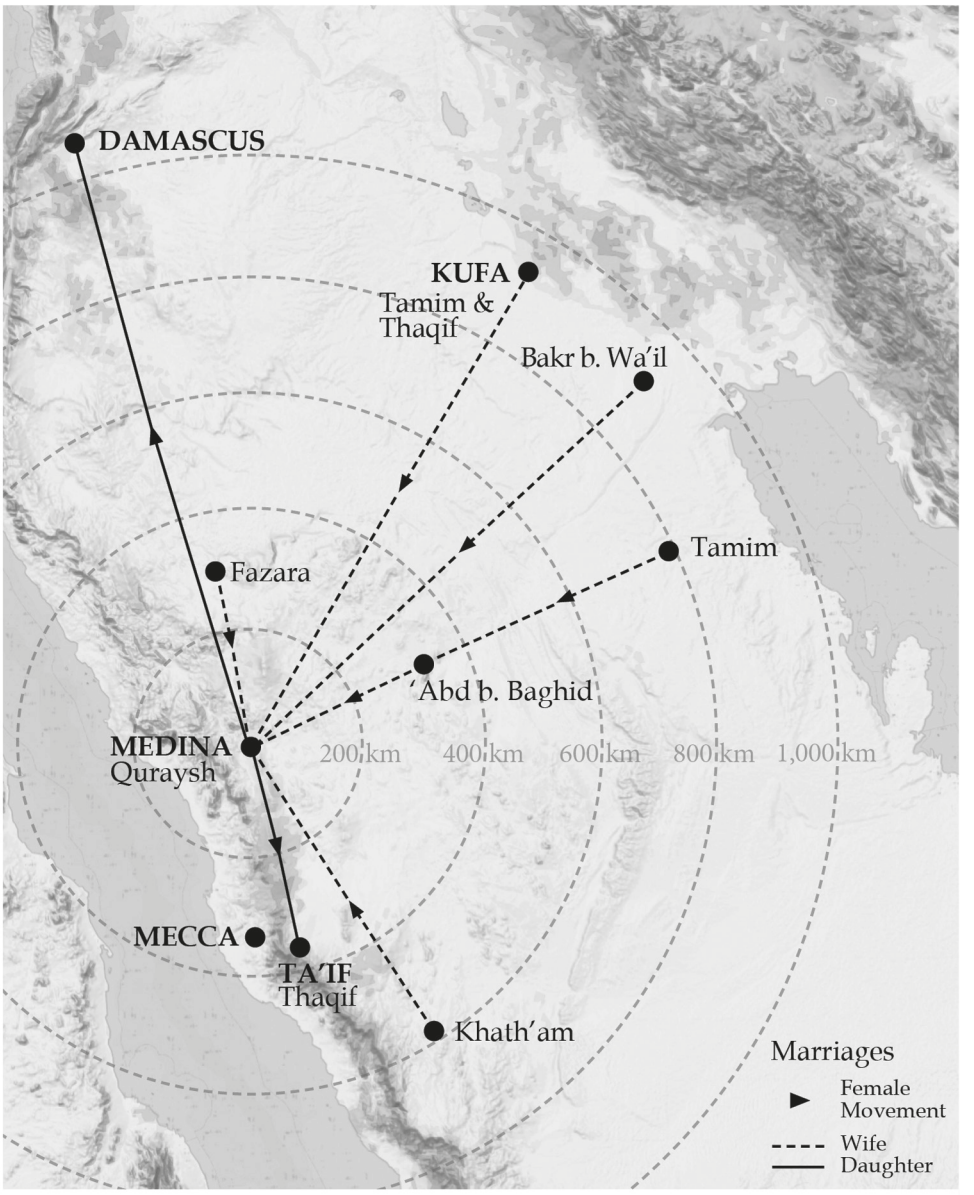

Figure 24.4 Geographic distribution of the marriages of ʿAbd Allah b. Jaʿfar's wives and daughters. Graphic design by Andrew Meehan.

Table 24.4 Qurashi female exogamy by generation.

Generation	*Total marriages made by Qurashi women*	*Number of exogamous marriages made by Qurashi women*	*Approximate time period marriages were made*[1]
0	10	1	450–480
1	19	0	480–510
2	42	4	510–540
3	73	10	540–570
4	99	7	570–600
5	155	20	600–630
6	171	17	630–660
7	155	6	660–690
8	149	3	690–720
9	96	3	720–750
10–11	73	0	750–810

[1] These are broad estimates loosely structured around the timeline of Muhammad's own life.

From Generation 2 to Generation 6 around 10 per cent of the marriages made by Qurashi women are made to non-Qurashi men; it is in Umm Kulthum's Generation 7 that it plummets. It is hard to imagine a convincing historiographical reason for this so the simplest explanation is the best one; Umm Kulthum's female Qurashi contemporaries were very unlikely to take husbands from outside the tribe.

But although female exogamy was uncommon amongst the Quraysh, it was certainly not unheard of. A total of 71 exogamous marriages certainly does not indicate a blanket ban on marriages of this type; compare, for instance, with marriages between Qurashi women and men from outside Arabia of which there is perhaps only one recorded instance in the entirety of the *Nasab Quraysh*.[35] At the time of Umm Kulthum's betrothal there would have been many Qurashi women married to non-Qurashi men; al-Hajjaj's betrothal to Umm Kulthum would not therefore have been as outrageous as it seemed amongst later generations who were temporally further removed from this behaviour. As for the notion that it was her Hashimite descent that made this marriage particularly egregious we should note that she was one of ten Hashimite women to marry out of the Quraysh.

The betrothal of al-Hajjaj and Umm Kulthum also correlates with what the data tell us about the 'destination' tribes of Qurashi women who marry out. Of the 71 marriages made by Qurashi women to non-Qurashi men, the tribal origin of 24 are these men is Thaqif, which is of course the tribe of al-Hajjaj. No other tribe is recorded as receiving this many Qurashi women as brides; the next highest are Khuzaʿa and Kinana with six and five marriages respectively. Not only this, within the 24 Thaqafi marriages, al-Hajjaj appears three times; in addition to Umm Kulthum, he marries a woman of Makhzum and a great-granddaughter of ʿUmar I.

What we can conclude here is that the betrothal of Umm Kulthum to al-Hajjaj was unusual rather than unprecedented. This matters because it forces us to reconsider the narratives of this marriage that explain the cause of its dissolution as being a response to widespread outrage over the permissibility of a Qurashi woman of such high standing marrying a man from outside the tribe. It is more likely that these narratives are reflecting the prejudices of the era in which they were written and do not represent actual marriage boundaries that existed in the Hijaz in the late seventh century. The behaviour of al-Hajjaj, ʿAbd Allah b. Jaʿfar and ʿAbd al-Malik in this affair should therefore be understood in political terms; status and outrage are most likely not important components.

IBN MUʿAWIYA RECONSIDERED

Until now, scholars have struggled to explain how Ibn Muʿawiya came to lead the revolt of 744. For Sharon he was simply in the right place at the right time; he follows Wellhausen in saying that 'as a personality ʿAbdallah b. Muʿawiyah was of no importance whatsoever'.[36] Sharon's argument is that when Kufa descended into one of its periodic bouts of chaos, the malcontents turned to Ibn Muʿawiya as he was the only representative of Muhammad's family present in Kufa at the time.

But the clues to the causes of his rise are in the diversity of his support. The Zaydi Shiʿites were with him at the outset, and he later won over Umayyad descendants of Marwan I and ʿAbd al-Malik; he also counted a future Abbasid caliph amongst his supporters as well as Kharijites and non-Qurashi tribal elites. Most scholars tend to note this diversity without indicating a cause, or hint that it was a testament to the unpopularity of Marwan II, the Umayyad who was brutally bringing the caliphate under his control in the period.[37]

Sharon is the most explicit in explaining the origins of this 'strange coalition'; it is the result of each faction 'seeking their own advantage'. Once again, this is the 'useful idiot' trope we found in Amir-Moezzi's explanation for ʿAbd Allah b. Jaʿfar's acceptance of Sufyanid stipends. But looking at this diverse array of supporters for Ibn Muʿawiya's rebellion we see that it is in the same mould as the marriages conducted by members of his paternal family in the two generations preceding him; returning to our tables on the marriages of ʿAbd Allah b. Jaʿfar and his children, we see a familiar mix of Umayyads, Abbasids, ʿAlids and Arab tribesmen. Ibn Muʿawiya was not the latest in a long line of patsies, but the end product of three generations of political manoeuvring which is reflected in the family's marriage behaviour. If there was any element of luck in this story it is on the Abbasid side where Abu Muslim committed himself to the Banu ʿAbbas scion at an early date; had his sympathies been with the Hashimites as a whole then Ibn Muʿawiya might have ended up as caliph.

CONCLUSION

This study of the context of Ibn Muʿawiya's rebellion shows the benefits that prosopography can bring to our understanding of the early Islamic historical sources. It exposes shortcomings in more traditional historical scholarship, as illustrated in the secondary literature's mischaracterisations of ʿAbd Allah b. Jaʿfar as merely a

Medinan *bon viveur* and his grandson ʿAbd Allah b. Muʿawiya as an accidental revolutionary. None of the existing studies on these men made much of the connections between grandson and grandfather, and we suggest here that this is because historians in the Western tradition have a tendency to raise the individual above the collective.

This tendency reflects itself in a resolute focus on individual behaviours and motivations which permeates our entire approach to historical study. To take one example, note how the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* in all its editions will contain hundreds of entries on individuals, but very rarely will it have entries solely on families. Where a family's inter-connections are treated within individual entries it is often done so in a cursory fashion, while marriage information has often been ignored.[38] Note also how Wilferd Madelung's journal article on the Hashimites carries out the first part of the job of the prosopographer by selecting a group and collating data, but ignores the second element which is to find the hidden connections between its members.[39] His work is really more a collection of individual stories told in terms of tangible events: the battles each person took part in, the armies each person led, the governorships each person was appointed to.

Prosopography demonstrates the dangers in looking at historical figures in isolation. Because ʿAbd Allah b. Jaʿfar and his family enjoyed no political appointments, and – prior to Ibn Muʿawiya's rebellion in 744 – were only bit-part players in other revolts, the family are viewed in the secondary literature through the prism of Shiʿi quietism or as hapless conduits for those with more aptitude for politics. But the connections were there all along, hidden in plain sight in the thousands of names and connections preserved by our sources. By focusing on these relationships we exercise an alternative methodology that allows us to bring this data into play.

To conclude, we will offer an alternative narrative structured around marriage and prosopography. ʿAbd Allah b. Jaʿfar, the son of an illustrious martyred Companion, had spent his life building up his political position, first through marrying into the family of ʿAli, then marrying into the Arab tribes based in the Najd and Kufa. When it came to his own children, he continued to act in a political fashion, integrating them into both the Umayyad dynasty and the Hashimites. At some point he may have promoted himself through the Hashimite *daʿwa* via stories of his generosity,[40] stories that would have neutralised the reports of his closeness to the Sufyanid regime and would have been attractive to potential converts to his family's cause.

This all came together in 744 when his grandson Ibn Muʿawiya arrived in Kufa and quickly assembled a large following consisting not only of opportunistic opponents of Marwan II but also people whose loyalty had been secured through two previous generations of marriages. Tellingly, the first thing Ibn Muʿawiya is reported to have done when arriving in Kufa is to marry a daughter of Hatim b. al-Sharqi b. ʿAbd al-Muʿmin b. Shabath b. Ribʿi of Tamim, who was descended from a long line of Kufan notables.[41] Although Ibn Muʿawiya's position as the leader of the Hashimite revolt was lost to the Abbasids, the work that he and his ancestors had put in meant that his descendants continued to exist as a respected and politically relevant family centuries later,[42] and even had an extremist Shiʿi sect devoted to them.[43] This is hardly the legacy of the chancers and quietists delivered to us in the existing scholarship.

NOTES

1 The research in this article was made possible by the Leverhulme Trust through their funding of the author's Early Career Fellowship.
2 A survey of the (very limited) secondary literature of the revolt can be found in Bernheimer 2006 Borrut's *EI3* entry, ''Abdallah b. Muʿawiya' (Antoine Borrut).
3 See further on this later, in this chapter.
4 This is in contrast to concubinage which is a form of marriage to which early Muslim elites turned precisely because it lacked a political dimension. See Robinson 2016.
5 Robinson 2016 and Robinson 2017. Ahmed 2007 uses marriage behaviour within a non-statistical framework of analysis to demonstrate a similar alignment between these unions and wider geo-political movements.
6 Al-Tabari 1879–1901: II 1880; al-Tabari 1989: XXVI 254; Crone 1980: 118.
7 Stone 1971 differentiates small group study from mass-data analysis and refers to them as the 'elitist and mass schools' (page 48) in reference to the social standing of the subjects. The elite/subaltern division made by Stone is not relevant to pre-Islamic prosopographical study however because virtually all named individuals are elites, hence the alternative terminology offered here.
8 Ahmed 2007: 15.
9 The distinction is naturally blurred; the volume of names mentioned in Ahmed 2007 (for instance) would not embarrass a mass-data study while this study shows how we can use mass-data to bring us closer to the level of individual narratives.
10 Agha 2003.
11 Romanov 2014.
12 Robinson 2016 and Robinson 2017.
13 As discussed in Harrison 2012: 37–8. I have avoided discussion here of Patricia Crone's *Slaves on Horses* despite its call-to-arms for prosopographical approaches ('early Islamic history has to be *exclusively* prosopographical', page 17). This is not only because the methodology of the prosopographical second half of the book is unclear in terms of why her core sources were selected and how the data has been extracted, but the argumentation in the discursive first half of the book seems completely unmoored from the prosopographical data in the second half.
14 They appear in al-Zubayri 1953: 81–3.
15 *EI2*, 'Musʿab' (Charles Pellat) contains the most extensive treatment of this writer, while Lévi-Provençal's introduction to his edition of the *Nasab Quraysh* usefully collates the principle Arabic sources on al-Zubayri's life and discusses them (al-Zubayri 1953: 14–22).
16 Umm Kulthum's complex marriage history is discussed in Ahmed 2007: 128–9.
17 Al-Zubayri 1953: 82–3.
18 Su I-Wen 2013: 9–10.
19 Al-Baladhuri 1996: II 317–18.
20 There is a problem in this report; the majority of other accounts agree that her marriage to al-Qasim b. Muhammad preceded the betrothal to al-Hajjaj, and this earlier marriage ended with the husband's death. Nonetheless, the account is important because it provides us with a reason for the termination of the betrothal to al-Hajjaj.
21 See also al-Isbahani 2009: IV 291–2.
22 Al-Mubarrad 1874: I 197–8; Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih 1983: I 322–3 and VII 132–3, Ibn ʿAsakir 1984: VI 205.
23 Jaʿfar has not received a great deal of scholarly attention either. Arguing for his greater significance in Prophetic Islam is Powers 2011: 75 ff.
24 Ahmed 2007: 128–30 proposes that Umm Kulthum's value in the marriage market was related to her ownership of land in the Hijaz. As he notes, if viewed in these terms then

her marriages to Umayyad-linked individuals were not an indicator of 'sociopolitical inclinations'.

25 This is despite the fact that Madelung's source for this is the *Nasab Quraysh* which, as we have seen, does not mention coercion on al-Hajjaj's side and does not give a reason as to why ʿAbd al-Malik intervened. Madelung does refer to Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih and al-Mubarrad's accounts which (like Ibn ʿAsakir) explain the termination of the marriage in political terms, but only to describe these as reporting 'a more elaborate account' (Madelung 1989: 19, note 65).

26 Robinson 2017.

27 There are potentially reasons to question his membership: he was born outside the Hijaz and rejoined the Muslim community relatively late in the Prophetic period; although prominent in the historiography, his father did not have a great deal of involvement in the key events of the early Muslim community; the high number of exogamous marriages is sometimes an indicator that a man was struggling to marry within his tribe (as we see with Saʿd b. Abi Waqqas, a man of very dubious origins who married in a similarly exogamous fashion. This is discussed in some detail in Ahmed 2007: 28–9). The marriages made by ʿAbd Allah b. Jaʿfar to ʿAli's daughters however indicate that he seems to have been considered a full Qurashi by the head of one of its most important families.

28 In addition to this there are concubine unions, which are many but difficult to count as they are not always enumerated in the *Nasab Quraysh*.

29 Qurashi here is taken to mean all descendants of Fihr. The differentiation between slave and free woman is very problematic; while we can assume that every woman listed as an *umm walad* was indeed a slave, we cannot assume that just because a woman was not an Arab she entered the community as a slave. Similarly, Arabian women with genealogies could have entered their unions as slaves. The distinction here is therefore between named women and *umm walad*s. Given the tiny number of women of ambiguous origin, this is not a problem from a mass-data perspective.

30 Schacht provides a likely (though by necessity speculative) sketch of the power dynamics involved in marriage arrangement in this period (*EI2*, 'Nikah' (Joseph Schacht)) Although it is possible that a couple of these may post-date his death, we can make the reasonable assumption that most of them took place during his lifetime given his longevity.

31 Note in the table below that the marriages of Umm Kulthum and her sisters appear in the section structured around her patriline. The marriages of her brothers however appear in the sections structured around the patrilines of their wives, meaning they would not have been found had we only looked in the expected section of the *Nasab Quraysh*. This illustrates the importance of creating comprehensive databases when analysing these texts; looking only at what appear to be the relevant sections may only provide a partial picture of what the work as a whole can tell us.

32 Robinson 2017.

33 Ahmed 2007: 200.

34 In the majority of cases, the tribal heritage of the husband is given or is obvious from the lineage. In a handful of cases we are given a name with a patriline so short it cannot be linked to anyone inside or outside the Quraysh; these are included in the total of 1,105 marriages but are excluded from the figure given for marriages made to men of non-Qurashi heritage.

35 This is between a grand-daughter of Umayya and a man known only as al-Azraq (al-Zubayri 1953: 137). Al-Azraq ('The Blue') is used elsewhere to describe slaves who presumably originated from the Roman Empire given that the term normally refers to eye colour.

36 Sharon 1990: 127.

37 See Hawting 2000: 99. Berkey 2003: 84 argues that the diversity of Ibn Muʿawiya's supporters is evidence that the opposition was 'unfocused'. *EI3* ''Abdallah b. Muʿawiya' (Antoine Borrut) mentions the diversity of the support but does not explain it.

38 See, for instance, the entry for Ibn al-Zubayr in the most recent edition of the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*; although we are told at the outset that 'Genealogical connections are crucial to understanding Ibn al-Zubayr's later career', and a summary of these connections is provided, what follows is a simple and familiar narrative of Ibn al-Zubayr's life which does not explain how these genealogical connections are relevant. The problem in this particular case is that Ibn al-Zubayr's rebellion was vigorously opposed by his patrilineal half-brother ʿAmr, who had many of the same genealogical connections.

39 Madelung 1989.

40 Note that although the Medinan al-Zubayri has a relatively long section on ʿAbd Allah b. Jaʿfar in his *Nasab Quraysh*, at no stage does he mention his generosity (al-Zubayri 1953: 82–3). It is suggested here that this is because this particular quality was a story spread by ʿAbd Allah b. Jaʿfar's proselytisers outside the Hijaz, and al-Zubayri had either never heard of it or did not find it credible.

41 Crone provides a summary of these reports collated from al-Tabari and al-Baladhuri's *Ansab al-ashraf* (Crone 1980: 118–19). Not mentioned in Crone's summary is a marriage ʿAbd Allah is reported to have made with an aunt of this daughter, Hannada bt. al-Sharqi, by whom he produced a son called Jaʿfar (Ibn Saʿd 1990: V 392).

42 Particularly amongst the Zaydiyya; we notice this becoming a flashpoint during the Buyid period in the tenth century. See Mottahedeh 1973: 34–5 for Jaʿfarids in Iran and Jiwa 2016: 251 for the Hijazi Fatimid context. Al-ʿUmari 2001: 508–19 provides us with information about the descendants of the Jaʿfarids up to the current time of the author who was writing in the 11th century; notable is the geographic spread of these descendants who lived in places such as Egypt, the Hijaz, and the Caspian provinces of Iran.

43 This is the Janahiyya. The most detailed attention to this obscure group can be found in Tucker 1980.

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CHAPTER TWENTY FIVE

HOW THE WEST WAS WON
Unearthing the Umayyad history of the conquest of the Maghrib

Edward Coghill

INTRODUCTION

The account which ultimately underpins all medieval and modern reconstructions of the events of the Muslim conquest of North Africa is that of Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam (d. 871), a ninth-century Egyptian scholar of law and history. Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam's account of the conquests is found in his *Conquest of Egypt, North Africa, and Spain* (*Futuh Misr*).[1] The fifth of the book's seven sections is devoted to the conquest of the Islamic west (Maghrib) in the period after the death of ʿAmr b. al-ʿAs (d. *c.* 663), the conqueror of Egypt.[2] It recounts the exploits of successive commanders who campaigned in the Maghrib up to the time of Hassan b. al-Nuʿman, who in in the 690s finally conquered the old Byzantine capital, Carthage, and succeeded in establishing a permanent Muslim authority based in Kairouan.[3] From this point the narrative focuses on the governors of North Africa and al-Andalus and their struggles to control the region, notably including an account of Tariq b. Ziyad's conquest of Iberia and its aftermath.[4] The course of the Berber revolts of the late Umayyad period from 739 is covered in particular detail and the section concludes with the final suppression of these revolts shortly before the Abbasid Revolution of 750. There is a clear break between this section and the next, which recounts a history of the Islamic judges of Egypt from the beginning of Muslim rule.[5] The final section of the book is devoted to *hadith* (reports about the Prophet Muhammad and his Companions), transmitted by Egyptian scholars.[6]

Close analysis of the material in section five of *Futuh Misr* allows new, more precise conclusions to be drawn about the origins and development of this material on the Maghrib, which have broader implications for thinking about the evidence for the Umayyad period in general, as well as for understanding the production of historical knowledge in the early Islamic period. The chapter begins by identifying a core narrative within Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam's account of the conquest and demonstrating that it can be reasonably ascribed to a moment of composition in the late Umayyad period, some 120 years before Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam's composition of his *Futuh Misr*. This calls into question more sceptical assessments of the prospects for reconstructing aspects of the transmission of historical material in the first three centuries of Islam.

Moreover, it allows us to explore the specific contexts which informed the production, transmission, and reformation of historical knowledge in Umayyad and early Abbasid Egypt.

First, by contrasting this late Umayyad narrative with Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam's supplements to it – his quotations from alternative sources – we may differentiate his concerns from those of his main source and thereby scrutinise his authorial agency and agendas. Second, by reading the original late Umayyad narrative against the transmission history which Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam provides when he quotes it, we may consider the changing uses and significances of this story in light of the people who told it and the historical developments of their times. The implications of these inquiries for whether the account is an 'accurate' depiction of the events it describes are not developed here. Rather, it is argued that identifying such early packages of historical information embedded within our extant sources gives us valuable opportunities to better historicise the production of historical knowledge in the murky period before our earliest extant Arabic texts, and to better assess the authorial role of the composers of those extant texts.

APPROACHES TO EARLY ISLAMIC HISTORIOGRAPHY

A path-breaking article by Robert Brunschvig, written in the 1940s, showed that several passages in Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam's account of the conquest of the Maghrib reflected Islamic legal or ritual debates regarding matters such as the legitimacy of taking slaves from other polities after a peace treaty, the proper division of loot by Muslim armies, or even the appropriate procedures for driving snakes out of houses.[7] Brunschvig concluded that advocating a position within these debates was 'all too often … the point of departure of this or that account', rather than genuine historical memory.[8] In this argument, Brunschvig's article anticipated the later application to historical texts of Goldziher and Schacht's sceptical approach to *hadith* (traditions about the statements and deeds of Muhammad), most famously by a group of revisionist historians from the 1970s onward.[9]

These revisionists argued that the normative force ascribed to the actions of Muhammad and his Companions by many early Muslims meant that the remembrance and recording of historical events from the very early Islamic period were inseparably bound up with position-taking in various political, social, ethical, ritual, legal, theological, and inter-confessional disputes. Furthermore, no Arabic historical texts existed from the first two centuries of Islam which might allow us to critically adjust for the perspectives of the authors of particular historical accounts. Instead, information initially circulated orally, either informally or in short narratives units about individual events (*akhbar*, sing. *khabar*) which were ripe for de- or re-contextualisation, misunderstanding, and polemical tampering. Only later, from the third Islamic century onward, was this information compiled into fixed texts, by which time even the best intentions of the compilers could not distinguish between truth, misunderstanding, and polemic in the surviving memory of the Islamic past.[10]

One important response to the challenge posed by the revisionists has been to use early non-Arabic sources in conjunction with a critical survey of all available Arabic accounts about a given event.[11] However, the limited coverage, content, and

insight into Islamic affairs of contemporary non-Islamic historical sources restricts the potential of this method. Further, where the survival of sources in both traditions does make comparison possible, the level of agreement between the sources has varied from case to case, preventing general conclusions for use in the overwhelming majority of cases where no non-Islamic sources exist as a control.[12] A different tradition of scholarship, pioneered by Harald Motzki, has developed a method dubbed '*isnad*-cum-*matn*' analysis to scrutinise the chains of transmission (*asanid,* sing. *isnad*) attached to near-identical passages of content (*mutun*, sing. *matn*) found in multiple extant Arabic texts. It has been proven that in some cases these passages, despite being extant in texts compiled in the ninth century or later, can be confidently ascribed to much earlier common sources datable to the first half of the eighth century, while deviations from these postulated ur-texts can be identified and discarded.[13] The common sources identifiable through these means, however, tend still to be removed from the beginnings of Islam which they describe by almost a century or more, and attempts to claim that this method identifies information from as far back as the seventh century have been contested.[14] Positivist historians still seem far from being able to pin down specific aspects of past reality in Arabic historical texts about the first century of Islam.[15]

While the participants in this debate hold different positions, they share a commitment to reconstructing what really happened in the seventh century. In the aftermath of the cultural turn in history, however, some historians have taken alternative approaches which embrace the literary nature of historical narratives, such as analysing the formal qualities of early Arabic historical writing, examining the symbols through which meaning was constructed within it, or reading it as sets of parables intended to speak to the political, cultural, and religious concerns of the Abbasid period from which our extant texts date.[16] This scholarship often engages with questions of remembering and communal identity-construction in the historical tradition rather than its objective accuracy, stressing local particularities and perspectives.[17]

However, even historians who are not invested in the 'accuracy' of the narratives they are studying, but rather in the construction and use of the past by later actors, must make decisions about how to historicise those narratives and in which contexts. One way out of this has been to rehabilitate the authorial agency of the Abbasid composers of our extant texts, accepting that while they may rarely have drafted new prose, building their texts as patchworks of citation, they guided their audience's responses to their texts through the selection and arrangement of these assemblages of quotations.[18] Thus, our extant texts can be read and analysed as instantiations of Abbasid world-views. This is an important step forward from viewing these historians as undiscriminating collectors. However, it can lead to an overestimation of the impact of Abbasid contexts of compilation to the content of these narratives.[19] As Motzki and others have shown, much of this information was first generated and transmitted in the Umayyad period. Without being able to understand something of these earlier materials with which Abbasid compilers were working, it is very difficult to assess the agency they exerted in the composition of their texts, consider the impact of their perspectives and agendas on the historical information which survives, and historicise the significance of their production of these texts. An approach is required which allows us to embrace the multi-vocal, multi-layered

nature of our earliest Arabic historical texts. Such an approach should help us to try to understand the different dynamics which drove the generation and transmission of historical accounts at different points in their existence, dynamics which determined the survival or not of particular historical narratives and perspectives.[20]

Here, the methods of those embroiled in the 'accuracy' debate can prove useful, even for those not seeking the same results. Antoine Borrut, in his major study of Umayyad historical memory, uses early non-Arabic sources not as a positivist control on the Arabic historical record, but as a means of accessing earlier moments in the stratigraphy of Arabic historiography.[21] Recent studies have shown Muslim and non-Muslim historians often writing in different languages but nonetheless operating in similar milieus, drawing on parallel sources of information, and mutually cross-pollinating each other's work.[22] As such, Borrut argues that the presence in eighth-century 'Christian' historiography of such themes as the piety of ʿUmar II, the heroism of Maslama b. ʿAbd al-Malik, and the massacre of the Umayyads after the Abbasid Revolution, demonstrate the widespread dissemination of particular historical interpretations in the Umayyad or very early Abbasid periods. These topics can then be used to search for surviving 'murmurs' of earlier Arabic memory in extant texts, and as a way of investigating how later Abbasid processes of remembrance or oblivion worked on these earlier drafts of history.

Likewise, the difficulties which the *isnad*-cum-*matn* school have in proving a seventh-century origin for the traditions they study ceases to be a problem if we consider the generation and transmission of historical knowledge from the eighth century onwards as an important object of study. Given the often limited remainder of corroborated positive information about events left after the rigours of *isnad*-cum-*matn* criticism, it may be that the most productive results of the method are the historiographical insights that it offers through the possibility of dating the propagation of early Islamic historical information, indicating the persons involved in its dissemination, and showing how it was reformulated by different actors operating in different contexts.[23] Scholars have of course shown interest in the lives and connections of important early figures in the Arabic historical tradition whose work is extant only in scattered excerpts quoted in later texts.[24] However, this work has rarely been combined with *isnad*-critical research attempting to ascertain systematically which extant passages of text can be reasonably attributed to these early transmitters. Further, this work has seldom considered the earlier narrative structures in which such passages were propagated, nor asked how later historians re-emplotted them by integrating them into new macro-narratives.[25]

Without such engagement with the earlier circulation history of the quotations which make up our extant texts it is difficult to differentiate the motives or agendas of the earliest transmitters of historical information from those of the authors who later quoted them. As an example of this we might return to Brunschvig's article on Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam, in which he despaired of being able to engage with such circulation histories.[26] This led him to conclude with the tellingly imprecise formulation that he could 'define the attitude of Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam *or* of his informants' (my emphasis), implicitly admitting his inability to distinguish between them.[27] The limitations of such imprecision can be seen in Brunschvig's supposed identification of an 'anti-Umayyad attitude' expressed in certain passages in *Futuh Misr*, but his reluctance to discuss who actually held this attitude or what they might have to

gain by disseminating stories which encapsulated it.[28] Such a de-historicised, de-contextualised reading of these narratives imposes an artificially stable, essential set of meanings on them, often privileging the supposedly original meanings. Positing such stable meanings easily results in the assumption that all the transmitters of historical information who related a given narrative did so for the same purpose, eliding the particular historical perspectives and commitments of early Islamic scholars operating at different times and in different contexts.

This difficulty of particularising the production of our earliest Arabic historical narratives has hampered our ability to properly consider the relationship of our earliest Arabic historical narratives to the contexts of their generation and subsequent dissemination, what the western medievalist Gabrielle Spiegel influentially dubbed the 'social logic of the text'.[29] However, as *isnad*-critical methods emerge which allow us to plausibly identify historical information from the late Umayyad period onwards and the people involved in propagating it, a historiography which traces the changing, particular evocations of the past in the early Islamic period becomes possible.

Such a historiography must ask what we can and cannot plausibly know about the non-extant early stages of the Arabic historical tradition, and how the later narrative arrangement of quotations of early material was used to reinvest it with new meanings. Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam's account of the conquest of North Africa and Spain is used here to demonstrate viable methods for this approach. The case study is grounded in engagement with the paratextual markers which Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam used to indicate the transmission histories of the quotations from which he assembled his text. A manuscript of a medieval Arabic book often begins with a *riwaya* – a list of names connecting the owner of the manuscript to the author of the book through a continuous chain of scholars, each of whom had been verified to teach the book by the next person in the list, leading back through the generations to the original author.[30] In turn, within a given book, individual passages of the text are introduced by *isnad*s (chains of transmitters), leading back from the composer of the book to his earlier sources in the same way. It is often assumed that the historical micro-narratives (*khabar*s) supported by these *isnads* were atomised pieces of information which were transmitted independently rather than as part of fixed narrative sequences with other, related information.

Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam's *isnad*s do not lead to an endless diversity of earlier informants, however. Rather, in several cases he repeatedly re-uses the same *isnad* to quote passages which together add up to a longer, coherent story. These instances indicate his reproduction, interspersed with other material, of a historical narrative which had already been 'packaged' and transmitted as a whole for several generations. Studies of later medieval Arabic historical texts have shown that a repeatedly used, identical *isnad* indicates the author's reproduction of a *riwaya* through which he was accessing a book which he was quoting.[31] It is argued here that the repeated reuse of an identical *isnad* in our earliest extant Arabic texts, from the ninth century, indicates something similar, and that this is the key to identifying packages of historical information which were composed and circulated in the eighth century. Passages from such a package can be identified as the backbone of Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam's account of the Maghrib. As its *isnad* claims, its content likely derives from information collected in the late Umayyad period, which was packaged and then re-transmitted until its incorporation in *Futuh Misr* in the middle of the ninth century. Identifying this package allows us

to study the persons involved in that composition and its subsequent transmission, as well as the authorial decisions Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam made in *Futuh Misr*, by juxtaposing material he quoted from that package against quotations from other sources.

The term 'package' rather than book is used here, as book would misleadingly imply a single, unchanging, primarily written form. With the partial exception of the Qurʾan, this was not the way in which text was circulated in early Islam, at least until the rise of a more bookish literary culture through the ninth century.[32] By 'package' is meant a body of information which was taught by a scholar as a whole in such a way that the whole might be again passed on by students (who nevertheless had agency to retransmit or use it partially). Each package may be seen as the repeatedly textually and/or orally reproduced remainder of an original instance of dissemination which was likely to have been constituted by a teacher's oral performance – supported by notes or even a full, prepared text – accompanied by students' listening, memorisation, note-taking or copying, and collation. The hybrid processes of written and oral/aural transmission developed in early Islam generally stressed close reproduction of the textual content, yet could allow transmitters to rearrange the order in which the package was presented, or add further reports or commentary to the whole, demarcating such additions through use of *isnad*s or not in accordance with the transmitter's standards of fidelity in transmission.[33]

The potential pitfalls and limitations of trying to reconstruct lost Arabic texts from excerpts and quotations have been well documented.[34] Ella Landau-Tasseron has shown not only the real possibility of false ascriptions (for example *isnad*s seemingly indicating direct quotation of earlier works might be reproductions of the *isnad*s from a later book which is in fact the source being directly quoted), but also the possibility of changes to the text. She also, however, lays out principles for establishing confidence in an author's faithful reproduction of quoted source material. These include engaging with and assessing the implications of the 'distinct terminology' of the markers an author uses to indicate their quotation of other sources and testing, where possible, quoted material against other quotations of the same text found in other extant works, in order to establish a model of both the fidelity of an author's textual reproduction in observable cases and the clarity with which they distinguish and bound quotations within their text.[35]

These tests have already established the very conservative quotation practice represented by Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam's near-constant use of *isnad*s in *Futuh Misr*, as well as his distinctive terminology, through a close study of his citations of Ibn Hisham's extant recension of Ibn Ishaq's *Sira*.[36] Further, two quasi-*isnad*-cum-*matn* studies of significant bodies of common traditions in *Futuh Misr*, Ibn Hanbal's *-Musnad*, and al-Baladhuri's *Futuh al-buldan* reveal non-significant differences between the quotations and common links from the eighth century, showing that Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam's text does preserve quotations of passages which reflect their earlier, eighth-century dissemination.[37] Indeed, the shared material with Ibn Hanbal indicates Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam's ability to preserve text taught by informants in the late Umayyad period while accurately remembering its origin. These exploratory sondages, which establish the general reliability of what Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam has to say about the origins of his quotations as far back as the late Umayyad period, are what enables the following excavation of Umayyad historical material from *Futuh Misr*.

EXCAVATING IBN ʿABD AL-HAKAM'S MAIN SOURCE FOR THE CONQUEST OF THE MAGHRIB

While the significant dependency of all later accounts of the conquest of the Maghrib on Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam, directly or indirectly, has been recognised in scholarship, it has not been noticed that Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam's citations indicate that his account was largely made up of quotations of a single, earlier narrative. This section of the chapter demonstrates how we may identify that underlying account.

Analysis of the patterns of citation in *Futuh Misr* reveals that Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam built its three main narrative sections – on Egypt's pre-Islamic history, the Muslim conquest of Egypt, and the Muslim conquest of the Maghrib – around several 'backbone' accounts. Only one such backbone account underpinned Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam's narrative at any given time. These seem originally to have consisted of continuous text, transmitted as a whole and unbroken by *isnad*s. Each described a sequence of events which amounted to a full historical narrative, rather than being made up of atomised anecdotes (*khabar*s) reporting discrete events.[38] When Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam first began to quote a particular backbone account he would give the unabridged *isnad* which supported it and described its origin. Thereafter, he would supplement the backbone account by interjecting into it passages of text relevant to the events it described, quoted from other sources, prefacing each interjected passage with an *isnad* which pronounced where he got that information from. The conclusion of the interjection and the resumption the backbone narrative was usually marked with the phrase: 'Then he [Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam] returned to the account (*hadith*) of … ' followed by an abridged version of the original *isnad*, frequently just the first, direct informant in the chain.[39] Often there is exact continuity between passages of the backbone account separated by an interjection, even to the extent of pronouns in a later passage referring to antecedents found in a passage placed before an interjection. The original integrity of these accounts is further confirmed by the fact that if we discard Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam's interjections, each backbone account makes up a coherent and consecutive sequence of events with a relatively clear beginning and ending, is related using its own peculiar terminology, and engages with its own particular concerns.[40]

Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam's narrative of the conquest of the Maghrib is largely made up of text quoted from one of these backbone accounts, which he learned from one of his teachers, ʿUthman b. Salih (d. 834–5). The text explicitly tells us that Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 'returned to the account (*hadith*) of ʿUthman b. Salih and the others'[41] (see Figure 25.1) when he describes the conquest of Barqa[42] and of Tripoli,[43] in an account of the withdrawal of Muslim troops from the west to retake Alexandria,[44] at the beginning of his account of the conquest of Ifriqiya,[45] and then nine further times throughout his description of the western campaigns.[46] These passages of text – all explicitly attributed to the 'account of ʿUthman' – make up much of the narrative progression of the story of the conquest of the Maghrib.

There are other passages that contribute to this narrative progression but do not begin with an *isnad*. These also appear to stem from ʿUthman's account, despite being generally introduced only with the statement, 'He said …' (*qala*). However, it is almost certain that this usage indicates a resumption of ʿUthman's account. For

example Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam's account of Musa b. Nusayr's takeover of the conquest of al-Andalus and victorious return to Damascus is introduced by *qala*.[47] About a page into this '*qala*-narration', Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam introduces two interjections: a brief alternative account of Musa's return to Syria, demarcated clearly by the phrase, 'It is said that' (*yuqalu anna …*); and a date for Musa's passage through al-Fustat *en route*, given with an *isnad*.[48] Immediately before these interjections, the *qala*-narration had taken up the theme of the gifts which Musa had brought to the caliph Sulayman, ending with the statement, '[Musa] presented these gifts to Sulayman and Sulayman was well pleased'.[49] Immediately after the two interjections, we are told that 'Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam returned to the account of ʿUthman b. Salih and the others', before continuing, 'While Sulayman was examining those gifts …'. This clear resumption of the *qala*-narration, labelled as a return to ʿUthman's account, demonstrates that the *qala*-narration was part of the *hadith* of ʿUthman, despite having only been introduced with the paratextual marker, 'He said …'. Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam must have expected his audience to know at this point that the subject of the introductory phrase, 'He said', was ʿUthman. The interchangeable use of *qala* and a 'return to the *hadith* of ʿUthman' recurs frequently in *Futuh Misr*'s section on the conquest of the Maghrib.[50] This strongly suggests that Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam, having repeatedly established his use of ʿUthman's account as the basis of his narrative, expected his audience to understand that the narration in this section was quoted from ʿUthman's account unless he explicitly stated otherwise.

A close reading of the text further strengthens the proposition that the apparently unattributed narration in this section is Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam quoting an earlier account rather than him speaking in his own voice. For example at one point Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam introduces an alternative report which contradicts the unattributed narration, and then states that the alternative report is correct. A *qala*-narration says that ʿUqba b. Nafiʿ was dismissed from the governorship of Ifriqiya in the year

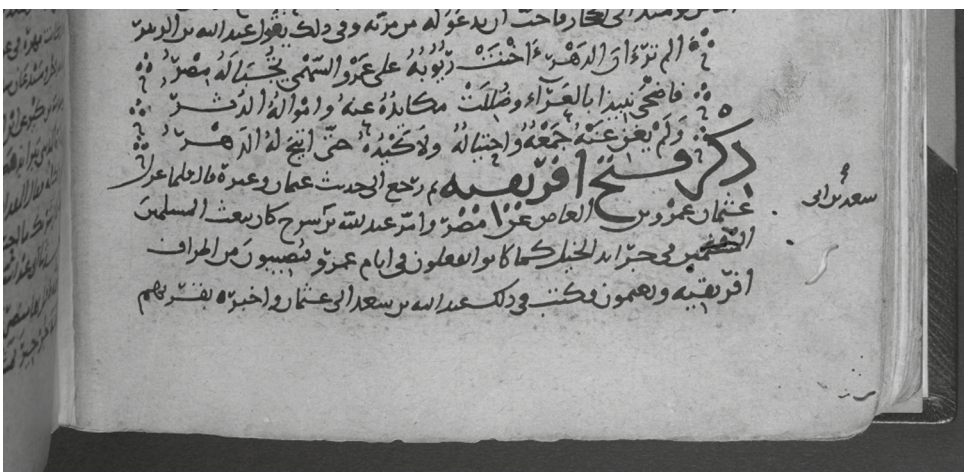

Figure 25.1 The 'return to the account of ʿUthman' at the beginning of *Futuh Misr*'s account of the conquest of Ifriqiya. © The British Library Board. Stowe Or. 6, f. 70v.

AH 61/680–1 CE. This narration goes on to say that ʿUqba complained about this to the caliph, Muʿawiya. This is followed by a clearly demarcated editorial comment by Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam which says that others claimed that ʿUqba complained not to Muʿawiya but to his successor, Yazid, and that this must be true because Muʿawiya had already died in AH 60/679–80 CE. Therefore, the unattributed narration cannot simply be read as Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam's synthesis of events. Rather it must have belonged to a source which he felt obliged to quote and then contradict if he disagreed with it. Here, again, Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam makes it clear what that source was by concluding this digression on the dating of ʿUqba's dismissal by explicitly returning to the *hadith* of ʿUthman.[51]

The relative lack of explicitly stated 'returns' to the *hadith* of ʿUthman, particularly later in his account of the Maghrib, may be because Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam had already made it clear where his account originated, and the interjections were so few and so clearly demarcated by their *isnad*s. For example in the last 14 pages of the section after the 'return to the *hadith* of ʿUthman' on page 211 there are only 14 interjections into the backbone narrative. Each of these interjections is presented with the same *isnad* (Yahya b. Bukayr from al-Layth b. Saʿd) and simply gives a date for an event mentioned by the backbone narrative. Given the regularity of the stated returns to ʿUthman's account already presented it would have been obvious to a reader or auditor where the rest of this section was coming from.

There are limitations, of course, to what we can say about the nature of ʿUthman's account and Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam's reuse of it. Lacking ʿUthman's original text, or significant independent bodies of quotations of it in other extant books, we cannot tell how stable its form and content was in earlier circulations of this package of material. Nor can we assess if and when Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam omitted material from the package of information which ʿUthman had transmitted to him, or whether he reformulated, paraphrased, or added to it. That said, Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam's observable practice when he quoted works which are still extant, and the tendency to textual conservatism in *hadith* scholars like him, suggest that verbatim reproduction was Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam's general rule when quoting text in *Futuh Misr*.[52] Further, even if we are not able to prove that he incorporated ʿUthman's text exactly as he received it, this does not prevent us from making use of the insights which Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam's *isnad*s give us into how he put his text together.

In sum, the bulk of the content of Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam's conquest of the Maghrib appears to be made up of quotations from a single, pre-existing account which he refers to as the 'account of ʿUthman b. Salih and the others'. He invokes this attribution to support passages of text which provide the basis of all of the major events in his account of the conquest of the Maghrib: the conquests of Barqa and Tripoli, the various later campaigns against Ifriqiya led by Ibn Abi Sarh, Muʿawiya b. Hudayj, ʿUqba b. Nafiʿ, and Hassan b. al-Nuʿman, and the conquest of al-Andalus headed by Tariq b. Ziyad and Musa b. Nusayr. The unattributed narration in the later part of the section, on the later Marwanid governors of the Maghrib, should also be understood as part of ʿUthman's account, given that Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam had already repeatedly established that it was the basis for this section and much apparently unattributed narration can be shown to have been part of it. Put together, the passages that on this analysis were originally part of that account would make up between 20 and 30 pages of the modern edition and tell a complete story of the conquest of the Maghrib

and its governance to the end of the Umayyad period. This accords with how Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam wrote the other narrative sections of *Futuh Misr*, which appear to be equally reliant on single pre-existing accounts which he broke up by interjecting into them other relevant reports.

This has significant consequences for how we conceptualise Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam's agency in constructing his account of the Maghrib. Rather than assembling it entirely from previously unrelated unconnected, atomised scraps of memory of different campaigns, he began with a whole, coherent package of historical information whose overarching narrative became the basis for this section of *Futuh Misr*. Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam then supplemented this narrative by interjecting into it various reports of different types. As such, we cannot say that it was Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam's innovation to produce a joined-up history of the conquest of the Maghrib and its subsequent rule, as this was already a feature of ʿUthman's account. It was, however, his choice to reproduce that account and to integrate it into his larger text, a choice which can be analysed as an instance of his agency. Furthermore, when we see Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam interject reports into this account which add to its scope, contradict it, provide commentary on the events described, or emphasise features already present in ʿUthman's narrative, these provide valuable clues to how he wanted to reconfigure this narrative for his own purposes. This kind of stratigraphic reading of a historical text – using the *isnad*s to identify packages of text which had been transmitted together as a result of earlier moments of compilation than that of the extant work in which they survive – allows us to distinguish between different types of compositional activity within early Arabic texts. Such analyses should help us to move beyond the false binary of either treating the authors of early Arabic historical texts as disinterested collectors whose compositional acts were too undiscerning to merit consideration in terms of authorship, or, equally problematically, superficially invoking the principles of 'selection' and 'arrangement' and then reading our extant texts as if their content and form were transparent indicators of their compilers' authorial intent.

In this case, distinguishing ʿUthman's account from Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam's interjections into it allow us to develop and historicise Brunschvig's insights into the presence of legally relevant material in *Futuh Misr*'s narrative. Almost all the passages shown by Brunschvig to be historically situated illustrations of debated points of Islamic law were not originally part of ʿUthman's account. Rather, most were interjected into it by Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam. By contrasting those interjections with the ʿUthman-account's representation of the events we may contrast the concerns of ʿUthman's account with those of Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam. For example at the conclusion of the first Muslim campaign against Ifriqiya, Brunschvig pointed out that the description of the distribution of the booty matched the canonical practices outlined in Islamic law regarding the shares (*sahm*, pl. *ashum*) allotted to a cavalryman versus an infantryman, and the fifth of the loot held back for the caliph (*khums*). However, the passage about the shares and the caliph's fifth was introduced by Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam from another informant. ʿUthman's account had simply concluded that the Muslims received tribute without discussing its distribution. Instead, it focussed on the fact that Ibn Abi Sarh did not appoint a governor or establish a permanent base in Ifriqiya (*qayrawan*).[53] That is, the focus of this part of ʿUthman's account was the institution of Muslim authority in the Maghrib, anticipating the foundation of the capital Kairouan, not legalistic norms of tribute distribution.

Likewise, Brunschvig points to two passages of *Futuh Misr* in which the conduct of the commander Muʿawiya b. Hudayj implicitly advocates for the permissibility of a commander making gifts out of the common spoils (*nafal*), a debateable practice in Islamic law. Again, we find that both these reports were introduced by Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam. ʿUthman's account had rather focussed on Muʿawiya b. Hudayj's establishment of a *qayrawan* in Ifriqiya and that his army comprised significant numbers of the prophet's Companions and the future Umayyad caliph ʿAbd al-Malik.[54] ʿUthman's account's concern was to glorify the Egyptian commander and show the involvement of Muhammad's Companions and Umayyad leaders in conquering and settling North Africa, not to introduce a case study about the prerogatives of a general when dividing the spoils. Similarly, the passages discussed by Brunschvig relating to soldiers concealing booty (*ghulul*) after the conquest of Spain are not part of ʿUthman's account, which is instead interested in the dramatic conflict between the two Muslim commanders involved in the conquest of al-Andalus.[55] Again, the two traditions which Brunschvig notes about ritual practice are Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam's interjections, not part of ʿUthman's account.[56]

This is not to say that ʿUthman's account was hermetically separated from normative discourse and discussions of the legal implications of conquest. That the treaty made with the citizens of Barqa stipulated that they could sell their children into slavery as part of their tribute is mentioned, for example.[57] But, aside from that instance, ʿUthman's account never discusses the conquests of North Africa and Spain using the legally significant terms of *sulh*, *ʿanwa*, *ʿaqd*, or *ʿahd*, and never specifies the terms of a treaty. In the other two passages Brunschvig identified as being illustrations of legal positions which do stem from ʿUthman's account, the point seems to be to give a positive characterisation of the actors in the narration. The first shows ʿUqba b. Nafiʿ following a prophetic example while founding Kairouan; the second allows the Umayyad caliph Muʿawiya b. Abi Sufyan to decree the canonical division of the booty.[58] However, given that some 20 to 30 pages of text derive from ʿUthman's account, it is the relative absence of legally normative material which is striking. This strongly suggests that the provision of legal exempla was not the motivating force behind the composition of this first draft of the history of the conquest of the Maghrib. Rather, their presence is a result of Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam's introduction of legalistic reports into an account which originally had other concerns. Motivations for these prior concerns in ʿUthman's account in turn require consideration of the circumstances of its composition.

THE UMAYYAD ORIGINS OF THE BACKBONE NARRATIVE

The preceding discussion shows how investigating the layers within our Abbasid historical texts allows us to inspect more precisely how Abbasid compilers exerted authorial agency in their presentation of Umayyad-era events. In this case, at least, it is also plausible that it exposes an Umayyad origin for the narrative of the conquest of North Africa and Spain which became the basis of the account we find in *Futuh Misr*. This section shows where that Umayyad-era account came from and what we know about the people who generated and transmitted it.

As noted above, when Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam starts to use one of these backbone accounts he presents a full *isnad* describing its origin and then subsequently gives an

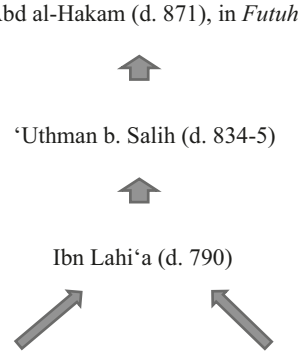

Figure 25.2 The *isnad* of ʿUthman's account.

abbreviated version of that *isnad* each time he returns to that account.[59] The only full *isnad* which Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam gives with ʿUthman as his direct informant in the section on the conquest of the Maghrib, from pages 183 to 225, is depicted above (Figure 25.2).[60]

Four features make this *isnad* the most likely referent when Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam gives 'the account of ʿUthman and the others' as the abridged *isnad* of his backbone account. First, as already noted, this is the only relatively full *isnad* starting with ʿUthman b. Salih that Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam presents amongst a swathe of invocations of ʿUthman's account. Second, a relatively unusual phrase (*istaqamat al-bilad*) is used in only three places in the *Futuh Misr* – in two separate reports each supported by this full *isnad* and in a third report in this section attributed only to the 'account of ʿUthman'.[61] This lexical peculiarity ties the account of ʿUthman on the western conquests to this *isnad*. Third, the *isnad* shares certain formal features with *isnad*s used to introduce other backbone accounts in *Futuh Misr*, notably a collective invocation of authorities at its earliest link followed by a concluding statement that one or some of those collective authorities had given more extensive accounts than the others.[62] Fourth, on two occasions Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam supports relevant reports on the western conquests with *isnad*s which look like less abbreviated versions of the same *isnad*.[63]

All of these individuals in this *isnad* were from Egypt, as is the case with many of Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam's *isnad*s in *Futuh Misr*. The *isnad* in question states that ʿUthman b. Salih learned the account from Ibn Lahiʿa. It then claims that Ibn Lahiʿa had amalgamated historical information taught to him by two of his teachers, Yazid b. Abi Habib and Ibn Hubayra. This amalgamated narrative was transmitted by Ibn Lahiʿa as a *hadith* (more usually, a report about the Prophet Muhammad or his Companions), with an *isnad* collectively invoking those two teachers. Indeed, in one of the cases where the full *isnad* is given, the account is called, the *hadith* of Yazid and Ibn Hubayra'.[64] Thus, it appears that Ibn Lahiʿa transmitted a continuous prose account of the conquest of the Maghrib, beginning it with a 'collective *isnad*' naming those two teachers. This is comparable – on a more limited scale – to the way in which al-Waqidi (d. 822) would begin his account of the Prophet Muhammad in his *Maghazi* ('Expeditions') with a list of the teachers whose information he had

combined into a single narrative and whom he would not subsequently mention beyond the occasional, 'They said …' (*qalu*).[65]

This purported source for the account is a perfectly plausible origin for this material. The work of Motzki, Schoeler, Görke, and Scheiner has shown that it is quite possible for accounts from the second quarter of the eighth century to survive in our extant texts, so the claim that the account reflects material taught by scholars who died in the 740s is not unbelievable in itself. More specifically, a comparison of near-identical reports about the conquest of Egypt found in both *Futuh Misr* and al-Baladhuri's *Futuh al-buldan* frequently reveals Ibn Lahiʿa as the common link, suggesting that in those testable cases Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam was genuinely transmitting material from at least as far back as Ibn Lahiʿa and correctly ascribing it to him.[66] Further, a significant body of near-identical *hadith*s found in *Futuh Misr* and the *Musnad* of the Iraqi *hadith* scholar Ahmad b. Hanbal (d. 855) have *isnad*s that trace back to Yazid b. Abi Habib through chains of respectively Egyptian and Iraqi scholars.[67] The close correspondence, with minor variations reflecting oral/aural transmission, of these independent witnesses to Yazid's *hadith*s shows that the Egyptian scholarly tradition in which Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam was working was able to faithfully transmit text from as far back as Yazid while accurately remembering this origin.[68] These cases do not conclusively prove that Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam's ascription of ʿUthman's account of the conquest of the Maghrib to Ibn Lahiʿa's amalgamation of Yazid and Ibn Hubayra's teachings was correct. They do, however, make it a reasonable supposition.

A final argument in favour of the ascription of the account's content to Yazid and Ibn Hubayra is the nature of its content and periodisation. The last dated event in its narrative is given as 744–5,[69] which is the same year in which Ibn Hubayra died; Yazid b. Abi Habib died two years later.[70] If the content of the account did derive from these two scholars, as is claimed by the *isnad*, this would explain the rather abrupt end of the account early in the rule of ʿAbd al-Rahman b. Habib over the Maghrib, rather than at a more conclusive moment such as his assassination by his brother a few years later.[71] The changing nature of the information given by the account also supports the notion that it was authored by figures of Yazid and Ibn Hubayra's generation. Medieval Arabic biographical sources tell us that Ibn Hubayra was born in 660–1 and Yazid in 672–3. The account's description of events from their youths or before their lifetimes is lacking in details of names or places beyond the commanders of the armies or locations of major conquests, but is thick on folkloric or storytelling details.[72] The account then becomes more sober and detailed when describing events to which they would have been adult witnesses. Hassan b. al-Nuʿman's conquest and return from Ifriqiya (*c.* 695–6) sees a marked change in the content, with increasingly more individuals known to the narrative. Then, especially after the account of the conquest of Spain (711–12), the narrative becomes a fairly detailed description of events surrounding the appointment of the governors of Ifriqiya and al-Andalus, their military campaigns, and the intrigues surrounding them.[73] Finally, the events following the Berber revolt of Maysara (739–40 onward) are covered in far greater detail than anything recounted thus far, with eight pages devoted to the next four years or so.[74] Thus, the changing focus of the narrative would seem to reflect the different kinds of information which individuals with the lifespans of Yazid and Ibn Hubayra would have known and been able to remember in later life.

The spike in detail for this period of *c.* 739–45 which concludes the account suggests a moment of compilation in the mid-740s. We might posit that it was the result of Ibn Lahiʿa (b. *c.* 713–16) recording the historical information about the Maghrib known by his two elderly informants and completing it with the latest news from the western front in the mid-740s, when he would himself have been about 30 years old. Ibn Lahiʿa then taught this as a package of information attributed to those teachers through an oral performance supported by a written text or notes, received by students auditing the performance, note-taking, sometimes copying their lecturer's written materials, and reciting it back to the lecturer for approval to retransmit it. Ibn Lahiʿa's narrative became considered a body of information to be passed as a unity by his students, much as Ibn Ishaq's *Sira* (d. 767), was transmitted. However, whereas Ibn Ishaq's *Sira* was a very large corpus which was ultimately preserved – in its most famous redaction – after the editing, arrangement, and commentary of Ibn Hisham, Ibn Lahiʿa's much shorter account of the conquest of the Maghrib was eventually preserved through its incorporation, interwoven with various supplements and interjections, as a part of Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam's expansion of it in the *Futuh Misr*.[75]

The ninth-century papyri published by Nabia Abbott and Raif Khoury include concrete, documentary examples of the written materials that scholars in Egypt operating at the time of ʿUthman b. Salih and Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam used in such processes.[76] Several of these papyri show assemblages of *hadith* collected from various informants by one early-to-mid-eighth-century scholar, transmitted to a student of his, and thenceforth re-transmitted together through generations, much as I propose Ibn Lahiʿa's collection of his teachers' information on the Maghrib was. For example document six in Abbott's book is a collection of traditions learned from various informants by al-Zuhri (d. 742) and transmitted to his student ʿUqayl b. Khalid (d. c. 759), thenceforth to al-Layth b. Saʿd (d. 791), and subsequently to one of al-Layth's students.[77] Some of the papyri edited by Abbott include material transmitted by Ibn Lahiʿa and ʿUthman b. Salih themselves, for example document nine, seemingly based on a collection taught by Ibn Lahiʿa to his student Abu Salih ʿAbd al-Ghaffar (d. 839), and a papyrus roll edited by Khoury which is largely ʿUthman b. Salih's record of a collection of apocalyptic *hadith*s learned from Ibn Lahiʿa. In this latter document ʿUthman adds to the package a body of material collected by another of his teachers Ibn Wahb, but clearly notes that the material came from a different origin. This shows how a package, while being re-transmitted, might be augmented by text quoted from other sources in such a way that left the material from the original package still distinct and identifiable. As such, material evidence from the exact context we are considering supports the plausibility of the transmission history for the account of the Maghrib claimed by its *isnad*.

ALTERNATIVE CIRCULATION OF THE BACKBONE NARRATIVE

It should be noted that several snippets of text which closely parallel passages from the account of ʿUthman on the Maghrib can be found in some later texts which do not seem to be reliant on *Futuh Misr*. This is most substantially the case in the *Futuh al-buldan* of the Iraqi al-Baladhuri (d. *c.* 892).[78] In all of these corresponding passages

al-Baladhuri claims that the text came to him through the *isnad* < Ibn Saʿd – al-Waqidi >, occasionally giving an informant who supposedly transmitted the passage to al-Waqidi. Al-Waqidi (d. 822) was a famous historian and judge with close links to the Abbasid court in Baghdad. His only extant historical works are on Muhammad's campaigns and the *ridda* (apostasy) wars after Muhammad's death, but he is said to have written on other historical topics and is widely quoted doing so by later historians.[79] It is in such excerpts that we find text which matches that found in *Futuh Misr*'s account of ʿUthman. Aside from al-Baladhuri, at least two other authors cite al-Waqidi as a source for passages which closely parallel short sections of the account of ʿUthman, suggesting that al-Waqidi did indeed teach material related to it.[80] However, despite the textual parallels and al-Waqidi's predating Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam (d. 871), it does not seem that al-Waqidi was the unacknowledged source of the material in the 'account of ʿUthman', which would contradict the explanation forwarded in the earlier sections of this chapter. The passages on the Maghrib quoted from al-Waqidi in *Futuh al-buldan* are less detailed than their equivalents in *Futuh Misr*. Further, these reports from al-Waqidi about the Maghrib contain alternative information which is not found in *Futuh Misr*, making a relationship of dependence between Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam and al-Waqidi less likely. Rather, there are indications which suggest that the reason for the common material is that some of al-Waqidi's information about the Maghrib ultimately came from the same sources as did the account of ʿUthman.

Al-Waqidi was born in 747–8, a couple of years after I have proposed that the 'account of ʿUthman' was first compiled from his teachers' information by Ibn Lahiʿa (d. 790). While al-Waqidi does not appear himself to have been in contact with Ibn Lahiʿa, at least three of al-Waqidi's informants did teach him historical reports which they had learned from Yazid b. Abi Habib, one of Ibn Lahiʿa's two sources for the Maghrib account.[81] These informants could have transmitted the same information on the conquest of the Maghrib from Yazid to al-Waqidi which Yazid also taught to Ibn Lahiʿa, thus explaining the commonalities between al-Waqidi's information on the conquest of the Maghrib and that found in the account of ʿUthman in *Futuh Misr*. Indeed, in one instance we find al-Tabari quoting al-Waqidi giving an *isnad* to Yazid b. Abi Habib and then presenting a passage of text which closely matches the ʿUthman account.[82] While al-Waqidi seems often to have not stated his sources when relating these parallel passages, or even named different sources, it is very possible that it is al-Waqidi's inexact citation practices which obscured his use of the same sources as the account of ʿUthman. Al-Waqidi was notorious even in his own lifetime for both falsely ascribing the sources of his information and for amalgamating his source texts while failing to cite each individually.[83] Modern scholars too, on comparing al-Waqidi's accounts of well-known events from Muhammad's life with other extant accounts, have concluded that at least in some cases al-Waqidi incorporated elements from several sources, often closely preserving their wording, while presenting the amalgamated result with a falsified single *isnad*.[84] Thus it is easy to imagine al-Waqidi replicating the wording of Yazid's teaching on the Maghrib in some of his amalgamated and unattributed passages, or even incorporating Yazid's words into a report with an *isnad* which didn't mention Yazid. In contrast to this, multiple cases of Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam's *isnad*s' accurate description of the transmission of information

from the generation of Yazid b. Abi Habib are provable and the transmission history of the ʿUthman-account which he describes is both plausible and matches the nature of its content. As such, I argue that Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam's own description of the origin of his account of the conquest of the Maghrib should be accepted. In this case, the passages ascribed to al-Waqidi by other texts which parallel the account of ʿUthman in fact indicate independent transmission of elements of that account from its original sources in the Umayyad period. The close syntactic and lexical correspondence between these parallel passages would, therefore, suggest that Yazid at least was teaching a stably worded history of the conquest of the Maghrib to different students already in his lifetime, rather than Ibn Lahiʿa composing the first stable text of the account based on information which he had learned informally from Yazid and Ibn Hubayra.

THE BACKBONE NARRATIVE IN CHANGING CONTEXTS

The various individuals and different moments of transmission recounted by the *isnad* supporting this account invite us to consider the contexts in which the account was generated and the changing meanings that learning and teaching it would have had to the different people involved in the transmission process through which it ended up in *Futuh Misr*. In what follows, the biographies of the named informants are examined in order to contextualise the generation and transmission of the material.

Very little is known about Ibn Hubayra (b. 660-1, d. 743-4) beyond his birthdate at the beginning of Muʿawiya b. Abi Sufyan's reign and his being a member of the South Arabian tribal grouping of Hadramawt.[85] In contrast, Yazid b. Abi Habib (b. 672-3, d. 745-6) was a prominent figure in Egypt and an important transmitter of *hadith* who attracted more biographical attention. He is described as having been the first to institute proper religious learning in Egypt – as opposed to transmitting apocalyptic statements or incitements to piety – and having had the honour of being one of the first two men to swear allegiance whenever a new caliph was recognised in Egypt. This link between his local prominence and his loyalty to the ruling Umayyad caliphs is underscored in a report that he used to brag that the Egyptians were partisans of ʿAli (*ʿalawiyya*) when he grew up, but that he himself had turned them into supporters of ʿUthman (*ʿuthmaniyya*).[86] ʿUthman was claimed by the Umayyads as the first of their line and was an important figure in Umayyad legitimation.[87] Yazid's pre-eminence in Egypt led to contacts further afield, including with the Umayyad court. Apparently ʿUmar II (r. 717–20) appointed him to give *fatwa*s in Egypt and he appears to have been in written contact with both ʿUmar II and al-Zuhri (d. *c.* 740), an important scholar and historian associated with the Umayyads.[88] Thus, we might well consider Yazid part of the group of 'piety minded supporters of the Marwanids' identified by Steven Judd.[89] By the end of his life Yazid was important enough to merit a deathbed visit by the governor of Egypt.[90]

Yazid had gained this position despite the fact that his father had been a slave. He was remembered in later sources as being 'as black as charcoal' and was a freedman (*mawla*) whose father had been captured by the Muslims during a raid into Nubia conducted by the second governor of Egypt ʿAbd Allah b. Abi Sarh.[91] This latter was the same governor whose campaigns in the west were celebrated by the ʿUthman-account. Before Yazid's father had been freed he had been owned as a slave by an

affiliate of Ibn Abi Sarh's clan, a sub-branch of the prophet's tribe of Quraysh, which formed an elite within early Islamic society.[92] Freedmen retained an association with the tribe of their former masters, however, sometimes even still living in their households, and this connection to the elite may well have helped Yazid on his way to prominence.[93] It is plausible that the memorialisation of Ibn Abi Sarh's victories in the west by the tribesmen to whom Yazid was affiliated was the source of his somewhat legendary information on the early campaigns in the Maghrib. Yazid's father, captured in one of the early raids conducted from Egypt, would have been another obvious source of his information on early Muslim expansion westwards. In any case, Yazid's ultimately high status and connections to the Marwanid establishment suggest that his information about the conquest of the Maghrib would reflect an elite, late Umayyad vision of history, the kind of information generated and maintained within aristocratic households and the state institutions – notably the military – in which they participated. Certainly, the information we find in *Futuh Misr* about the governors of North Africa and al-Andalus in the Marwanid period came from a well-positioned and informed contemporary source.

While the ultimate sources of information of the account are, of course, of fundamental importance to understanding its perspective, we must equally recognise that its survival depended upon its importance and utility to later scholars. Ibn Lahiʿa (b. c. 714, d. 790), who the *isnad* claims amalgamated Yazid and Ibn Hubayra's information into something like the narrative we have preserved in *Futuh Misr*, was a prominent figure in Egypt in the Abbasid period, being chief judge (*qadi*) of Egypt for nine years (*c.* 771–80).[94] His tombstone hangs in the Museum of Islamic Art in Cairo to this day (Figure 25.3). His status seems to have been built on a combination of scholarly prestige, connection to local power brokers whose eminence originated in the Umayyad period, and accommodation to the new Abbasid regime which took power in Egypt when he was around 35 years old. He had studied with some of the important 'Successors' (*tabiʿun*) to Muhammad's Companions in Medina, as well as important Egyptians such as Yazid.[95] Ibn Lahiʿa claimed that Yazid had foreseen that he would one day be chief judge of Egypt, thereby rooting his status in his position in a teacher-student succession of Egyptian legal authorities.[96] The reality was that he was appointed by the Abbasid caliph in Baghdad, al-Mansur (r. 754–75), at the behest of a delegation of Egyptian grandees including Ibn Lahiʿa's uncle, who had been the commander of the navy at Alexandria under the last Umayyads.[97] There are indications that Ibn Lahiʿa had himself worked to get in with the Abbasids by going on military campaign with the Abbasid governor of Egypt Salih b. ʿAli (r. 750–1, 753–5).[98] He is emblematic of a local Egyptian elite which had flourished under the Umayyads manoeuvring to maintain their status under the Abbasids.

Ibn Lahiʿa's collection of the information for this account, however, must have predated the Abbasid Revolution, given the death-dates of his informants. As argued earlier, a date in the mid-740s is likely. This would have been exactly the time when Ibn Lahiʿa's uncle was in charge of the Umayyad fleet at Alexandria. It might even have been conducted under his uncle's patronage as part of a project to formalise the Egyptian military's institutional memory of its proud past of jihad in the Maghrib. This possible moment of compilation of the account is only the beginning of the story, however. The version which we have derives from a transmission of it by Ibn Lahiʿa's student ʿUthman b. Salih (b. 761-2, d. 834-5). ʿUthman, might have learned

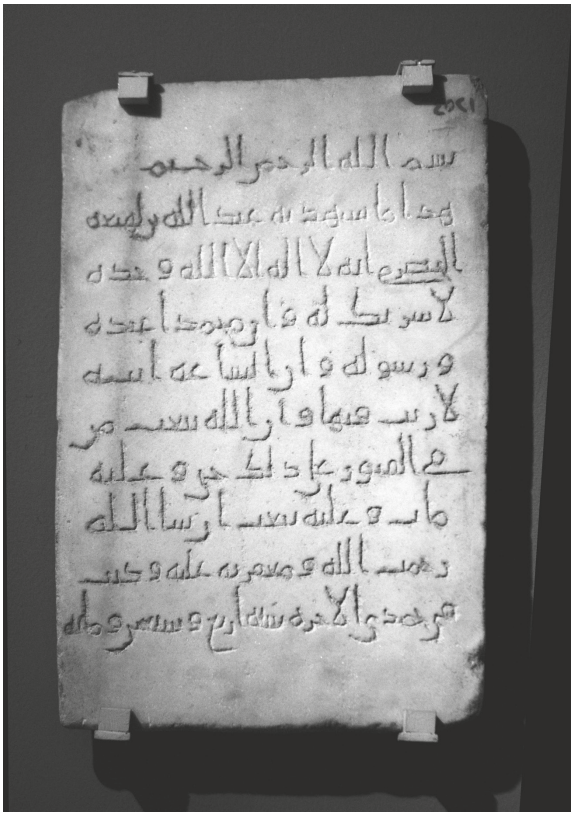

Figure 25.3 Ibn Lahiʿa's tombstone, Museum of Islamic Art, Cairo. Photograph by Edward Zychowicz-Coghill.

it in the 770s, while Ibn Lahiʿa (d. 790) was chief judge, or in the 780s, after his dismissal. The relevance of the account to Ibn Lahiʿa and his contemporaries would have been manifold and would have changed over time, as would the implications of continuing to teach it under new circumstances in the Abbasid period.

It is impossible for us to capture these changing contexts fully, but it is at least worth trying to consider how they might have affected and effected the continued reception and use of such a package of information. The place of Muʿawiya b. Hudayj in the narrative is a case in point. Ibn Hudayj was remembered as a Companion of Muhammad and a participant in the conquest of Egypt. He and his descendants consistently occupied various state offices throughout the Umayyad period and were probably the most powerful local family in Umayyad Egypt.[99] In the ʿUthman-account, Ibn Hudayj is given an important role in the western conquests, leading campaigns and even acting as commanding officer to the future Umayyad caliph ʿAbd al-Malik.[100] For Yazid, Ibn Hubayra, and their student Ibn Lahiʿa in the late Umayyad period, propagating this aspect of the narrative may have been a means of seeking the favour of the most powerful local aristocratic house in the region. However, with the coming of Abbasid rule, such local Egyptian elites as Ibn

Hudayj's family struggled to maintain their role in the Abbasid state in the face of incomers from Baghdad and Khurasan. For 20 years after the Abbasid Revolution only outsiders were appointed to govern Egypt. Yet when a local man was finally appointed as governor, it was a grandson of the same Ibn Hudayj: the old elites still had some traction.[101] It was this grandson of Ibn Hudayj who proposed Ibn Lahiʿa for the judgeship to the Abbasid caliph, exercising the possibilities for patronage which came with his position.[102] At this point, celebrating Ibn Hudayj could clearly still bring practical rewards. However, the valences of this celebration must have already changed. In the face of new elites from elsewhere holding the prime state offices and patronising their own networks of dependents, acclaiming these local heroes (and, implicitly, their descendants) likely became a way for actors with primarily Egyptian connections to promote the legitimacy and prestige of the heads of local networks of power and patronage.

By the time Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam was incorporating ʿUthman's account into his *Futuh Misr*, however, the takeover by Abbasid elites from elsewhere was more or less complete. Furthermore, at least some of the local heroes of ʿUthman's account, including Ibn Hudayj, had become far more contentious figures. In 831, an Egypt-wide rebellion against the imposition of centralising Abbasid authority – in particular the direct governance of the future caliph al-Muʿtasim – had compelled the caliph al-Maʾmun himself to come to Egypt to put it down. Both of the leaders of this rebellion claimed to be descendants of early generals from Egypt celebrated by ʿUthman's account and whose deeds Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam also chose to retell, devoting eight pages of his book to them.[103] Ibn ʿAbd al-hakam was a likely sympathiser, at least, with those rebel generals: while putting the rebellion down al-Maʾmun threw Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam's father in jail, where he subsequently died, and his family would be strongly associated with resistance to al-Maʾmun's inquisition (*mihna*). In these circumstances, Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam's retelling these aspects of the ʿUthman account seems less like a play for patronage and more a means of linking oneself with a critical stance towards al-Maʾmun and al-Muʿtasim's imposition of outsiders in the governance of Egypt.[104]

Knowledge of the region's past would no doubt have been leveraged in different ways by local brokers of historical knowledge at different times. ʿUthman b. Salih, as we have seen, was the scholar who learned the account from Ibn Lahiʿa and taught it to Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam. In a biographical anecdote related by his son we hear that ʿUthman used his knowledge of the seventh-century treaties with the Nubians to talk his way into the circle of ʿAbd Allah b. Tahir, the Khurasanian strongman who had reconquered Egypt for the Abbasids in the 820s after the third civil war.[105] Here we see local historical knowledge being used to gain influence with and recognition from a powerful supra-regional actor. By the 820s this was certainly a more viable strategy than trying to reproduce the elite status of an Egyptian-Arab aristocracy who no longer occupied the corridors of power.[106] As the usefulness of flattering the local tribal aristocracy by retelling the stories of their conquering forbears diminished, local Egyptian scholars may have been more inclined to refit an originally less legalistic historical account, such as that about the conquest of the Maghrib, as a narrative frame for more normative material about law, ritual, taxation, and foreign relations. The story of ʿUthman and Ibn Tahir suggests that these scholars could still use control

of such normative knowledge to gain access to power.[107] Such a shift in the use of this historical narrative might help to explain why Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam found it fitting to interpolate so much legalistic material into an account of the Maghrib which originally had a far less normative focus.

CONCLUSIONS

Modern historians of the Umayyad period cannot neglect the Abbasid-era processes of transmission and compilation which determine our access to historical information about this earlier period. Nor, however, can students of Abbasid historiography ignore the Umayyad contexts which established the parameters of the historical tradition which their Abbasid successors inherited. In spite of our lack of autograph manuscripts and original archives, which have until now led to some pessimism about the prospects for reconstructing these Umayyad contexts, the prevalent practices of citation and biographical writing in the early Arabic historical tradition in fact give us valuable resources with which we can reconstruct some of the dynamics of the field of historical production in the Umayyad and early Abbasid periods.[108]

The historiographical comments earlier in this chapter argued that we need to find productive methods of working with the multi-vocal, multi-layered nature of the texts through which we encounter the earliest periods of Islamic history. The case study then presented makes no claims to outline a definitive method. It is rather a demonstration of one attempt to do this along with the kinds of results we might gain. Underpinning its approach is the belief that there is much to be learned from close, systematic readings of whole, extant works which take seriously the *isnad*s which are such a significant and unique part of Arabic historical writing. The prevalence of these paratextual elements in early Arabic historical writing suggests that they were fundamental to many authors' and audiences' understandings of these texts and should therefore be integral to our analyses of their authorship, reception, and the narrative strategies deployed within them.[109]

Beyond this, *isnad*s can give us precious information about the origins and circulation of historical information before it was fixed in the extant works through which we access it. Ignoring them is akin to an archaeologist ignoring the find contexts of the artefacts she studies, or an academic reading a piece of secondary literature without reference to its footnotes. Recent historical approaches drawing on actor-network theory have emphasised that understanding the historicity of texts requires engaging with their mobility through time and space. We must consider how texts moved, moved others, and were devised in order to move others; how their circulation contributed to the construction of fact; and how that circulation can only be understood with reference to 'the ambitions, plans, and projects of individual or collective actors'.[110] *Isnad*s give early Islamic historians remarkable resources with which to address such questions and contribute to wider, cutting-edge debates within the field of history. Such *isnad*-sensitive approaches will often build on the conclusions and methods of *isnad*-cum-*matn* studies. However, by shifting our focus from the debateable earliest layers of the Arabic historical tradition to the later Umayyad and early Abbasid periods, we may be able to find more clear-cut or less controversial

attributions of historical production and transmission. This may not get us closer to witnesses of Muhammad's life and the very beginnings of Islam, but it can tell us about the people who were shaping the formative visions of Islamic history which were taken up by the authors of our extant texts, and the contexts in which this shaping took place.

Beyond allowing us to trace the earlier stages of circulation and composition of historical texts, paying greater attention to *isnad*s also allows us to sharpen our awareness of the different compositional textures of extant works. We may observe, for example where the composer of a work was largely reproducing the content and form, and thereby the concerns and perspectives, of their main sources. Within this, we may see where they introduced information from alternative sources, potentially to endorse, contradict, reframe, or obscure the perspective of those main sources. Conversely, a total variety of direct informants for a section of text demonstrates that it was not based on a main source, and was thus a newly conceived composition. Thus, we gain more purchase on the composer's agendas and how these interacted with the agendas of their sources and informants.

It is likely that scrutiny of repeatedly used *isnad*s found in other early historical texts will allow us to identify further collections of passages stemming from late Umayyad- or early Abbasid-era historical compositions which had been subsequently handed down as a united package of information by several generations of scholars. Al-Tabari, for example repeatedly uses the same formula that we observe in *Futuh Misr* of 'returning to the *hadith*' of particular informants.[111] Further and more systematic studies of the apparent origins, scope, and contents of al-Tabari and other historians' backbone accounts, as well as their circulation histories, should offer us valuable insights into the processes of eighth-century historical knowledge-construction which produced the information on which later, extant historians relied.

In the case of *Futuh Misr*, this kind of reading demands that we reinspect the conclusions of Brunschvig in his analysis of its version of the conquest of the Maghrib, now repeated for 70 years and often projected onto the whole of *Futuh Misr*. Brunschvig did not attempt to disambiguate Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam's different sources, nor his different uses of them. As such, he ascribed an originally legalistic concern to the whole on the basis of various passages within it which clearly spoke to legal debates. Yet the *isnad*s allow us to see that the presence of legally relevant material in *Futuh Misr*'s account was largely a result of Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam's interjecting it into a core narrative of the Maghrib campaigns – the account of ʿUthman – first compiled in the late Umayyad period and containing relatively little such material. The content of this core account was not originally devised as a prop for legal exempla. Other motivations and contexts would better explain its generation, and what we can know about the people and relationships involved in its production and initial dissemination point to likely possibilities. Likewise, even as we observe with Brunschvig that Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam did incorporate many legally relevant anecdotes into *Futuh Misr*, asking where, how, and why he used such normative material within both the micro- and macro-narrative structures of his text will reveal more telling and precise conclusions than assuming that they demonstrate a blankly 'legal' purpose to his history.

NOTES

1 Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922. On Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam and his family see *EI*2, 'Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam' (F. Rosenthal); Brockopp 2000: 1–48. For the narrative of the conquests and the importance of *Futuh Misr* to its reconstruction, see Taha 1989: 55–83; Kennedy 2007: 200–24, 308–23; Manzano Moreno 2010: 581–93; Kaegi 2010; Hoyland 2015: 78–81, 142–8. English translations of the Spanish and North African parts of this account can be found respectively in Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1858 and 1901. The former quite fully reproduces the text and the citations within it which are fundamental to the following analysis, although often misreads the proper names. The latter, unfortunately, confuses matters by omitting passages which the translator deemed superfluous and often reducing citations (*isnad*s) within the body of the original text to the footnotes, e.g. Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1901: 285, ft. 5; 287, ft. 2.

2 Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 192–225. This section follows on from accounts in the previous section of initial westward campaigns launched from Egypt. On the conquests of Barqa and Tripoli see: 170–2; for the first campaign against Ifriqiya proper (that is, into modern Tunisia), the first raid south into Nubia, and the naval engagement, the 'battle of the masts', see: 183–91.

3 Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 193–202.

4 Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 202–25.

5 Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 226–47.

6 Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 248–319.

7 Brunschvig 2008, whose conclusions are restated by Kubiak 1987: 18–19; Kennedy 1998: 63; Clarke 2012: 29; Manzano Moreno 2010: 590.

8 Brunschvig 2008: 225.

9 Crone and Cook 1977; Wansbrough 1978. For a summary of and reflection on these debates, see Donner 1998: 13–31. The essential general reference on early Islamic historiography is Robinson 2003.

10 Crone 1980: 1–17. For a more extensive (and optimistic) evaluation of these processes see Schoeler 2009.

11 The most comprehensive survey of early non-Arabic writing about Muslims is Hoyland 1997.

12 Compare Conrad 1992 and Robinson 2004.

13 Motzki 2000. See further Görke 2011. For application of this methodology to historical traditions about the Arab conquest of Damascus, see Scheiner 2010, with some results summarised in Scheiner 2011.

14 The most extended claim for identifying first-century information is Görke and Schoeler 2008, challenged by Shoemaker 2011, with a response by Görke, Motzki, and Schoeler 2012.

15 Other promising avenues illuminating different aspects of the past – with their own limitations – include the use of documentary and archaeological data, for example Walmsley 2007; Sijpesteijn 2013; Avni 2014.

16 Leder 1992; Beaumont 1996; Sizgorich 2004; El Hibri 2010.

17 Khalek 2011; Clarke 2012; Savant 2013; Munt 2014.

18 For a summary of this approach with references, see Clarke 2012: 28. Some historians, like al-Masʿudi, did draft new text and represent their activity in more obviously authorial ways, though they seem to have been a minority. On the variations within types of historical writing see Hoyland 2006.

19 For example, in El Hibri's invaluable study of narratives of the *rashidun* caliphs he states that 'redating historical traditions to the Abbasid period' is an 'implicit conclusion' of

his work. It might be argued that it is rather an unproven premise of his study. El Hibri 2010: 22–3.

20 For a sophisticated discussion of the issues surrounding questions of authorship and multivocal texts, see Behzadi 2015.

21 Borrut 2011, summarised in Borrut 2018.

22 Breydy 1977–78; Borrut 2009; Hoyland 2011, 2014.

23 As suggested by Toral-Niehoff 2011.

24 For example, Lecker 1996. See also Elad 2003, which could benefit from more methodological clarity in assessing the nature of the historical production of the 'writers' presented.

25 Though see Rotter 1974; Leder 1991; Mourad 2000; Lindstedt 2013, 2014a, 2014b; Andersson 2019.

26 Brunschvig 2008: 226.

27 Brunschvig 2008: 222.

28 Brunschvig 2008: 219–22. Brunschvig makes an *a priori* adoption of the supposed anti-Umayyad sentiment of ʿAbbasid scholars as the interpretative key to a set of equivocal anecdotes regarding Umayyad individuals, anecdotes which are not a prominent feature of the text. Rather than seeking our sources' opinion on issues we think should have been of primary importance, we ought follow the structure and argumentation of our sources to discern the arguments their composers were trying to promote.

29 Spiegel 1997, esp. ch. 1.

30 *EI*2, 'Riwaya' (Stefan Leder).

31 Atassi 2012; Scheiner 2016.

32 Toorawa 2005.

33 Schoeler 2006: esp. 28–44; Schoeler 2009.

34 Conrad 1993; Landau-Tasseron 2004.

35 Landau-Tasseron 2004: 67–82.

36 Zychowicz-Coghill 2017: 112–58.

37 Zychowicz-Coghill 2017: 159–78, see 176, n. 145 for the common material with *Futuh al-buldan*.

38 Zychowicz-Coghill 2017: 178–322. The existence of such accounts has been recognised, see for example Donner 1998: 255, 258–9.

39 In Arabic: *thumma rajaʿa ila hadithi* [*fulan*].

40 Zychowicz-Coghill 2017: 178–99.

41 '[T]he others' (*ghayrihi*) are the earlier scholars not present in this abbreviated form of the *isnad*, on whose authority ʿUthman transmitted this material.

42 Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 171, l. 2.

43 Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 171, l. 9.

44 Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 173, l. 11.

45 Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 183, l. 5.

46 Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 183, l. 14; 184, l. 11; 193, l. 12; 198, l. 7; 199, l. 19; 201, l. 15; 206, l. 19; 211, ll. 9, 23.

47 Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 210, l. 7.

48 Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 211, ll. 4–8.

49 Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 211, ll. 1–4.

50 Another clear instance of this is the '*qala*-narration' of the beginning of the conquest of al-Andalus: Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 204–6. For other cases, see Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 197–8, 200–1. The reverse also occurs, with Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam interrupting the account of ʿUthman with a report given with an *isnad*, and then resuming ʿUthman's account at exactly the same point without explicitly stating it, for example Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 206–7.

51 At Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 197–8. Note that in the body of Torrey's text (page 197, l. 1) he has ʿUqba dismissed in AH 51/671–2 CE but this is because he follows MS A. According to MSS B, C, and D it is AH 61/680–1 CE. MS A, the basis of Torrey's text, appears to have been 'corrected' to AH 51/671–2 CE. This 'correction' of the text cannot have Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam's original wording, however, or Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam's own correction of the date at Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 198, ll. 3–5 would have been unnecessary.

52 For analysis of Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam's quotations of Ibn Hisham's recension of Ibn Ishaq's *Sira*, see Zychowicz-Coghill 2017: 112–58. On another *hadith* scholar/historian's textual conservatism, see Andersson 2019: 139–65.

53 Brunschvig 2008: 188. Note the clear distinction between the account of ʿUthman, Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 183, ll. 14–19, with the legalistic report given with an *isnad*, Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 183, l. 19–184, l. 4. The case of whether the family of a man who died on campaign before fighting should be given his share of loot is also unmentioned in the ʿUthman account.

54 Brunschvig 2008: 202–6. The two interjected traditions about *nafal* are Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 193, ll. 3–11. Contrast ʿUthman's narrations, Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 192, l. 21–193, l. 3, resumed at Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 193, l. 12–21.

55 Brunschvig 2008: 207–8. All the reports on this topic are introduced by Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam with *isnad*s, Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 208, l. 21–210, l. 6, in contrast to the ʿUthman-narrative related before and afterwards, introduced either with *qala* or an explicit return to ʿUthman's account.

56 The traditions concern postponing the Ramadan fast while on campaign and the resumption of an interrupted public prayer. Brunschvig 2008: 209–11, based on the traditions starting with *isnad*s at Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 172, l. 7 and 185, l. 13.

57 Discussed by Brunschvig 2008: 190–9. One of the passages he is referring to does seem to be from ʿUthman's narration, Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 170, ll. 12–13, as it is resumed at Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 171, l. 2 with a 'return' to the account of ʿUthman.

58 See Brunschvig 2008: 212–17 on ʿUqba's campaigns, related as part of ʿUthman's account at Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 196, ll. 7–12. Brunschvig 2008: 206–7 on Muʿawiya, compare Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 193, ll. 18–21.

59 Most clearly demonstrated in the account used to describe the Egyptian campaign from Babylon to Alexandria. The full *isnad* given at Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 64, l. 11 as ''Uthman b. Salih - Khalid b. Najih - Yahya b. Ayyub and Khalid b. Humayd – Khalid b. Yazid – a group of the *tabiʿun*, some saying more than others'. Subsequent 'returns' to this account describe it alternatively as the '*hadith* of ʿUthman' (Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 66, l. 2; 73, l. 3; 77, l. 11; 79, l. 14) or the '*hadith* of Yahya b. Ayyub and Khalid b. Humayd' (Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 65, l. 1; 70, l. 21; 73, l. 19; 74, l. 13; 76, ll. 3, 14; 80, l. 2; 87, l. 20). The continuity between passages labelled in these two ways shows that both terms refer to the same account and that the '*hadith* of ʿUthman' is shorthand for the full *isnad*. On this, see Zychowicz-Coghill 2017: 186–9.The *isnad* is abbreviated in a slightly different form at Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 83, l. 13.

60 Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 191, l. 20. Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam first introduces this *isnad* at 128, l. 14, repeating it at 130, l. 12. The same *isnad* is given but with only Yazid without Ibn Hubayra as its earliest link at Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 91, l. 2. These early invocations of the same account describe ʿAmr b. al-ʿAs' settlement of Egypt and certain early administrative arrangements. I believe that the account originally started with these events before going on to describe the western conquests. However, because *Futuh Misr* dealt with these settlement arrangements separately to the western conquests we find these first quotations of the account much earlier than the section in which it becomes the backbone account which is the framework for *Futuh Misr*'s section on the conquest of the Maghrib.

61 Compare Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 130, l. 13 *lamma -staqamati -l-biladu lahum …* with Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 191, l. 21 *lamma -staqamati -l-biladu …* In both cases these are part of reports supported with the above *isnad* given in full. Then, in a report attributed to the *hadith* of ʿUthman at Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 201, l. 18 we find the phrase *wa-aqama Hassan bi-mawdiʿihi hatta -staqamati -l-biladu lahu*.

62 In this case the phrase is *yazidu ahaduhuma ʿala sahibihi*, whereas in other backbone accounts we find *yazidu baʿduhum ʿala baʿdin*. For other examples of the form of the *isnad*s given to support backbone accounts see the *isnad*s at Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 55, l. 22, repeated at 60, l. 22, and 64, l. 11.

63 At Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 185, l. 10 he refers to what ʿUthman had related to him from Ibn Lahiʿa and 'the others' and at FM: 177, l. 19 we read that he returned to the 'account of Ibn Lahiʿa on the authority of Yazid b. Abi Habib', both of which could be alternative shorthands for this *isnad*.

64 In the first repetition of the full *isnad* at Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 130, ll. 12–13.

65 al-Waqidi 1989: 1–2. His opening *isnad* is discussed by Jones 1983: 348. Yaʿqub al-Zuhri (d. 828), an Iraqi contemporary of al-Waqidi, seems to have used a similar practice. See Landau-Tasseron 2004: 81.

66 For reports found both in *Futuh Misr* and *Futuh al-buldan* with Ibn Lahiʿa as the common link, compare Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 88, 89, 90 and al-Baladhuri 1988: 211, 214–17, 217. Various other figures from Ibn Lahiʿa's generation are also identifiable as the common links in this body of information, see Zychowicz-Coghill 2017: 192, n. 145.

67 The following references provide the location of the corresponding traditions independently ascribed to Yazid in *Futuh Misr* and Ahmad Ibn Hanbal's *Musnad*: Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 97 (Ibn Hanbal 2001: XLV, 201), Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 104 (Ibn Hanbal 2001: XXXIX, 442, 444), Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 231 (Ibn Hanbal 2001: XXVIII, 526, 586), Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 252–53 (Ibn Hanbal 2001: XXIX, 312), Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 259–60 (Ibn Hanbal 2001: XXXIX, 442, 444), Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 266–67 (Ibn Hanbal 2001: XLIV, 343), Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 272 (Ibn Hanbal 2001: XXXVII, 415), Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 278 (Ibn Hanbal 2001: XXXIX, 361, 385), Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 279 (Ibn Hanbal 2001: XXVIII, 199), Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 282 (Ibn Hanbal 2001: XXVIII, 526, XLV, 201), Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 288 (Ibn Hanbal 2001: XXVIII, 525, 585 [twice]), Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 292 (MA: XXVIII, 563 [twice]), Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 293 (Ibn Hanbal 2001: XXVIII, 526, 586), Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 295 (Ibn Hanbal 2001: XXVIII, 526, 611; XLV, 201), Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 303 (Ibn Hanbal 2001: XXIX, 569), Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 306 (Ibn Hanbal 2001: XXXIX, 438), Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 310 (Ibn Hanbal 2001: XXVII, 281).

68 This argument is made and illustrated in full in Zychowicz-Coghill 2017: 159–77.

69 Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 224, ll. 3–4.

70 On Yazid b. Abi Habib see al-Dhahabi 2003: III, 562–3. For Ibn Hubayra see al-Dhahabi 2003 III, 448; al-Mizzi 1980: XVI, 242–4; Ibn Hibban 1991: 194; Ibn Saʿd 1990: VII, 354; al-Suyuti 1967: I, 269.

71 On Ibn Habib, see *EI2*, 'ʿAbd al- Rahman b. Habib b. Abi ʿUbayda (or ʿAbda) al-Fihri' (E. Lévi-Provençal). Note that Lévi-Provençal dates these events slightly later than the account found in Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam.

72 See for example, ʿUqba b. Nafiʿ's campaigns against three nameless kings, each following the same narrative arc which concludes with him mutilating them as an object lesson and receiving 360 slaves in tribute, Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 194–6.

73 At Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 202–3 we see the first named actors who were not themselves governors or major commanders, such as the recruiting sergeant Jandal b. Sakhr or the insurgent Arab leader ʿAtiyya b. Yarbuʿ. The drier narrative after the conquest of al-Andalus starts at Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 213, l. 11.

74 Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 217–25, though the last page covers a few events following the last hard date in the text in 744–5 by a short, unspecified period of time.
75 For a summary of the issues surrounding the different recensions of Ibn Ishaq's *Sira*, see Kudelin 2010. Al-Samuk 1978 stresses the differences between the recensions.
76 Abbott 1957–72; Khoury 1986.
77 Document seven shows a similar process for a body of hadiths collected from various authorities by Yahya b. Saʿid (d. 760), and document eleven for a collection brought together and taught by Haywa b. Shurayh (d. c. 775), all in Abbott 1957–72.
78 Notably scattered through al-Baladhuri 1988: 223–8. See especially al-Baladhuri 1988: 223–4 with various closely corresponding passages to Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 183. Also al-Baladhuri 1988: 224–5, compare Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 183, ll. 19–20; al-Baladhuri 1988: 226 on Ibn Hudayj and Abu -l-Muhajir, compare Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 198; al-Baladhuri 1988: 226 on Zuhayr b. Qays, compare Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 202–3; al-Baladhuri 1988: 226 on Hassan b. al-Nuʿman, compare Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 200. Despite these parallels al-Baladhuri never cites Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam in his work, indicating reliance on a common source. The same is the case in the substantial material on the conquest of Egypt which is present in both *Futuh al-buldan* and *Futuh Misr*. This material was transmitted to al-Baladhuri – through intermediaries such as ʿAmr al-Naqid and Abu ʿUbayd al-Qasim b. Sallam – from the same earlier Egyptian informants who were Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam's indirect sources.
79 *EI2*, 'al-Wakidi' (Stefan Leder). For a tenth-century list of his works, see Ibn al-Nadim 1970: 214–16.
80 Compare the closely parallel passages in Abu -l-ʿArab al-Tamimi no date: 12, credited to al-Waqidi, and Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 183, credited to the account of ʿUthman, on Ibn Abi Sarh's campaign. al-Tabari 1387AH: V, 240 recounts, on the authority of al-Waqidi, Maslama b. Mukhallad's appointment of Abu -l-Muhajir as governor of Ifriqiya in terms which clearly reflect Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 197.
81 Al-Tabari 1387AH: V, 240, has al-Waqidi quoting Yazid on the authority of al-Mufaddal b. Faddala (d. 797–8), and then relates a passage which clearly corresponds to Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 197, ll. 1–6, where it is part of the unattributed narration which I have argued is part of the account of ʿUthman. This is the clearest indicator that al-Waqidi's information on events in the Maghrib derived from the teaching of Yazid b. Abi Habib, just as did the account of ʿUthman. On al-Mufaddal, see al-Dhahabi 2003: IV, 982–3. Further indications of al-Waqidi's indirect use of Yazid b. Abi Habib are found in al-Waqidi 1989: II, 745, 855, where we find two reports explicitly related from Yazid by ʿAbd al-Hamid b. Jaʿfar (d. 770–1), on whom, see al-Dhahabi 2003: IV, 114–15. ʿAbd al-Hamid was one of the informants given by al-Waqidi in the long collective *isnad* at the beginning of the *-Maghazi* and as such it is also possible that al-Waqidi included in his *-Maghazi* more information transmitted to him from Yazid by ʿAbd al-Hamid under the umbrella of the collective *qalu*. Another channel of information between al-Waqidi and Yazid was al-Waqidi's informant Usama b. Zayd al-Laythi (d. 770–1), on whom see al-Dhahabi 2003: IV: 23–4. We find al-Waqidi twice quoting Yazid b. Abi Habib on Usama's authority regarding events of early Egyptian Islamic history at al-Tabari 1387AH: IV, 256–7.
82 See the beginning of the previous footnote.
83 For example, by Ibn Maʿin (d. 847) and Ibn Hanbal (d. 855), noted by *EI2*, 'al-Wakidi' (Stefan Leder).
84 Schoeler 2011: 91–9.
85 Al-Dhahabi 2003: III, 448; al-Mizzi 1980: XVI, 242–4.
86 The above information can all be found at al-Dhahabi 2003: III, 562–3, though he is mentioned in many other biographical dictionaries.
87 Crone and Hinds 1986: 32–3.

88 For the *fatwa*s, al-Dhahabi 2003: III, 563. For his written contact with ʿUmar see Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1984: 111. We see him transmitting from al-Zuhri at, for example, al-Fasawi 1981: I, 387, though later find a report denying that Yazid had heard *hadith* from al-Zuhri, al-Fasawi 1981: II, 431. Ibn Maʿin explains that Yazid did not hear from him in person but transmitted material which al-Zuhri had written for him, Ibn Maʿin 1985: I, 126. On al-Zuhri, see Lecker 1996.

89 Judd 2013.

90 Al-Dhahabi 2003: III, 562.

91 His father's capture is noted explicitly at Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 188, related on Yazid's authority. Ibn Lahiʿa apparently made the comment about his skin colour, al-Dhahabi 2003: III, 562.

92 ʿAmir b. Luʾayy. Some sources claim that Yazid was a *mawla* of Azd, see al-Mizzi 1980: XXXII, 102; al-Dhahabi 2003: III, 562–3; al-Suyuti 1967: I, 299. However, the earliest sources state that he was an ʿAmiri, see Ibn Saʿd 1990: VII, 356; al-Bukhari no date: VIII, 336; Ibn Hibban 1991: 197. Al-Bukhari (d. 870) gives the most specific information about the circumstances of his father's manumission, which makes him an ʿAmiri *mawla*, while al-Dhahabi's also quotes an earlier, famous Egyptian biographer, Ibn Yunus (d. 958), who also thought Yazid an ʿAmiri.

93 On *mawla*s see the articles in Bernards and Nawas 2005. For a documentary example of a *mawla* in early Abbasid Egypt living in the household of his former master, see Tillier and Naïm 2018. For another case of a *mawla* whose father had been a prisoner of war who became a prominent figure in Egypt and transmitter of historical information, see ʿUbayd Allah b. Abi Jaʿfar, a *mawla* of the Umayyads, al-Dhahabi 2003: III, 690–1.

94 For his appointment and career see al-Kindi 1912: 368–70.

95 Al-Dhahabi 1985: VIII, 12–13. Some ninth-century critics were damning about his reliability as a hadith-transmitter on the basis that he claimed to directly transmit *hadith*s from scholars whose work he knew only through intermediaries, though some critics maintained a positive opinion about him, such as Ahmad b. Hanbal. These criticisms spurred various attempts by various scholars to establish ways of reliably transmitting from him, see al-Dhahabi 1985: VIII, 14–25. Accusations of his Shiʿism seem to rest on his transmission of a single pro-ʿAli *hadith*, see al-Dhahabi 1985: VIII, 24, but I share al-Dhahabi's scepticism about over-interpreting that, expressed at al-Dhahabi 1985: VIII, 26.

96 Al-Kindi 1912: 369–70.

97 For the appointment, see al-Kindi 1912: 368–9. His uncle was ʿAyyash b. ʿUqba al-Hadrami, although some people denied the relationship. On him see al-Mizzi 1980: XXII, 558–9 and al-Dhahabi 2003: IV, 174.

98 Al-Dhahabi 1985: VIII, 19; Ibn ʿAsakir 1995: XXXII, 136.

99 The prominence of the Banu Hudayj has been noted by Kennedy 1998: 65–6. See further the useful diagram and earlier discussion in Bouderbala 2008: 330, and comments by Mikhail 2014: 136–60.

100 Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 192–4, 193 for his relationship to ʿAbd al-Malik.

101 Al-Kindi 1912: 117.

102 Al-Kindi 1912: 368–9.

103 Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam 1922: 192–200, following ʿUthman's account, is essentially structured around the exploits of Ibn Hudayj and ʿUqba. On the events of these rebellions the closest guide is still Dunn 1975.

104 See further Zychowicz-Coghill 2017: 30–53.

105 Noted by Guest in his introduction to al-Kindi 1912: xxvi–xxvii, referring to a story in al-Maqrizi 1998: I, 370–1.

106 The classic description of this process is still Kennedy 1998. See Dunn 1975 for a more detailed narrative. The last quarter of the ninth century appears to have been the turning

point. Until around 790 it seems to have been essential for the governor to appoint a man from one of the major tribes who settled Egypt after the conquest as *sahib al-shurta*, his second-in-command. After that point we almost never see such a 'local' appointment, as can be deduced from the charts at Bouderbala 2008: 319–25.

107 Or, at least, that they wanted to promote such a paradigm of interrelation between political and scholarly elites.

108 Contrast Robinson 2012: 256.

109 On paratexts see Genette 1997.

110 Asdal and Jordheim 2018: 67.

111 On al-Tabari's use of this term and the *isnad*s with which he uses it see Zychowicz-Coghill 2017: 193–6.

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CHAPTER TWENTY SIX

POWER, LAW AND IDEOLOGY IN UMAYYAD AL-ANDALUS

Mateusz Wilk

The age of the Umayyad caliphate of Cordoba (929–1009) is one of the most emblematic periods of the history of al-Andalus, often referred to (both by classical historians and by modern scholars) as a time when al-Andalus enjoyed political unity, as well as influence and status unmatched in later times. Although the outline of the political history of that period has been fairly well known for a long time,[1] the strand of research involving the ideology of power of the Cordoban Umayyads began to develop at a much later age. The present chapter first sketches a brief outline of these problems, in order to underline the main themes of research on the ideology of the Cordoban Umayyads and their historiography. Second, the chapter turns to the specific question of the role of jurisprudence in Umayyad ideology in al-Andalus, using the examples of *amir*s Hisham I (r. 788–96) and al-Hakam I (r. 796–822) in the chronicle of Ibn al-Qutiyya (d. 977).

RESEARCH ON THE IDEOLOGY OF THE CORDOBAN UMAYYADS – PRINCIPAL THEMES

The seminal works for the study of the ideology of the Umayyad caliphate of Cordoba are *L'idéologie omeyyade* by Gabriel Martinez-Gros[2] and *Identité andalouse* of the same author.[3] In *L'Idéologie omeyyade* Martinez-Gros attempts to explain the process of the 'construction of legitimacy of the Cordoban caliphate'[4] using sources from the tenth and eleventh centuries. In the first part of the book he focuses mainly on the *Kitab al-Qudat bi-Qurtuba* ('The Book of Judges of Cordoba') by al-Khushani (d. 971),[5] the *Tarikh iftitah al-Andalus* ('The History of the Conquest of al-Andalus') by Ibn al-Qutiyya,[6] the annals of ʿIsa al-Razi (d. 980),[7] the anonymous *Akhbar majmuʿa* ('Collected Traditions')[8] and the so-called *Crónica anónima de ʿAbd al-Rahman III* ('Anonymous Chronicle of ʿAbd al-Rahman III').[9] In the second part Martinez-Gros discusses two works of Ibn Hazm (d. 1064), a geographical treatise, the *Tarsiʿ al-akhbar* ('Adornment of Traditions') by al-ʿUdhri (d. 1085)[10] and the memoirs of the last Zirid *amir* of Granada, ʿAbd Allah b. Bulughghin b. Ziri (d. after 1090).[11] Instead of offering a political history of the Cordoban caliphate, or even a traditionally conceived history of it, Martinez-Gros proposes a reconstruction of its ideology of power through an analysis of narratives. Beginning with the question of the motivations of the Umayyad historians,[12] he discusses what he believes to be the main themes of the chronicles: the memory of the conquest of al-Andalus

(including the relations between the Arabs and their clients [*mawali*, sing. *mawla*])[13] and its Umayyad interpretations.[14] Then he proceeds to deal with the memory of the caliphate after its demise caused by the civil war of 1009–31 and well into the *taifa* period.[15] The history of Andalusian historical writing and political thought is thus divided into two distinct phases: that of 'tying the threads of history' in the tenth century, when the historiography of the Cordoban caliphate strives, according to Gabriel Martinez-Gros, to inscribe itself into wider Islamic history and to confirm the legitimacy of the Spanish Umayyads as caliphs. A special importance is granted here to the narratives of the conquest of al-Andalus and its 'mythology', especially the complex relationship between the two heroes of the conquest – Musa b. Nusayr and his Berber client, Tariq b. Ziyad. To put it briefly, according to Gabriel Martinez-Gros, in the tenth century the Muslim conquest of Spain is reinterpreted by historians of the caliphate and the narratives on it serve not only the purposes of perpetuating the memory of the past, but also as a foundation of the ideology of Umayyad power. After the fall of the caliphate in 1031, the second phase begins, where the political, historical and even geographical literature of al-Andalus becomes 'nostalgic writing' (*écriture nostalgique*).

A similar approach is displayed also in this author's second book – *L'identité andalouse*.[16] The main focus here is al-Andalus and its identity, rather than Umayyad political ideology, but Ibn Hazm's *Tawq al-hamama* ('The Dove's Collar') is discussed extensively as an allusive pro-Umayyad political treatise,[17] and an important theme of the book is the memory of the Umayyads as one of the essential constituents of al-Andalus' identity. Some space is also dedicated to an anonymous chronicle entitled *Fath al-Andalus* ('The Conquest of al-Andalus'), which is considered by the author as an anti-Umayyad source and an example of a competing historiographical tradition.[18]

In both books, Gabriel Martinez-Gros argues that the literature of al-Andalus contains many narrative patterns and symbols, which can be used and interpreted to reconstruct either the ideology of the Umayyads, or a memory of it or of the dynasty itself. By tracing (often very subtle) mutations in the myths of al-Andalus (for example 'the closed house' of Toledo, the Table of Solomon and the relationship between Tariq b. Ziyad and Musa b. Nusayr) present in the narrative sources, Martinez-Gros attempts to reconstruct not only the Umayyad political and ideological agenda, but also the memory thereof, as well as its reinterpretations in later periods. This author does not refrain, at the same time, from arguing that at least some of the discussed texts have a hidden (*batin*) meaning, which, obviously, is not explicitly referenced in these sources and it is only implied by our interpretation of them.

This approach led to no small amount of controversy, arguably the most notable being Martinez-Gros' polemics with Pierre Guichard.[19] These debates revolved around the question of the internal organisation of society and to what extent these 'social structures' reflect those known from the Islamic East. In other words, the question at hand is that of the proper identity and auto-identification of al-Andalus. Pierre Guichard argued that the particularity of the Andalusian society resided in the particularity of its most basic structures, like family or tribe, and concluded that, for the most part, those were inherited from the Islamic East, thus invalidating the classical theory of 'Hispanicity' of al-Andalus, to which many prominent scholars of the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century adhered.[20] Gabriel Martinez-Gros considers Guichard's methods of distinguishing between 'Oriental' and

'Western' social traits and structures arbitrary and argues that Guichard ignores the intentions and agendas of the authors of the classical sources.[21] Instead of attempting to understand the Andalusian identity by means of reconstructing social structures of the Islamic West, Martinez-Gros proposes to discuss Umayyad ideology, as well as the particularities of the Andalusian or Maghribi self-identification through careful analysis of written sources and political visions which are proper to them. A very important aspect of this approach is the question of memory and its uses in the process of the making of ideology and identity.

While the direct or indirect influence of Gabriel Martinez-Gros can be perceived in some other works, not necessarily pertaining to Umayyad al-Andalus,[22] his approach is hardly the only one in this strand of research. The works of Eduardo Manzano Moreno are of particular interest here, as Manzano Moreno attempted to put the extensively discussed problem of the relationship between the Muslim aristocracy taking part in the conquest and their indigenous clients (*mawali*) in al-Andalus in a new light. This relationship is one of the key questions considered by Pierre Guichard in his reflection on 'Eastern' and 'Western' social structures.[23] Manzano Moreno, however, tries to view the origins of Andalusian historiography and thus, indirectly, Umayyad ideology, in the light of these social divisions.[24] A somewhat similar approach to the question of social realities behind the Umayyad historiography, albeit more focused on narrative patterns in chronicles, was adopted recently by Nicola Clarke.[25]

The common point between these several, at times divergent, methodologies and approaches is a focus on narrative sources. One of the earliest problems to be discussed was that of the question of so-called 'Eastern' and the 'Western' elements in the society of al-Andalus. Originally, Pierre Guichard tried to discern between them, considering classical narrative sources adequate for this type of research and comparing his findings with social structures known from the modern Maghrib. Although Gabriel Martinez-Gros challenged Guichard's views, considering the narrative sources of al-Andalus generally unsuitable for this discussion and finding Guichard's methodology flawed, the problem of the relationship between the East and the West is nonetheless crucial for his reasoning. According to Gabriel Martinez-Gros, the aforementioned 'tying of the threads of history' in the Umayyad caliphal historiography – that is the process of placing al-Andalus and its rulers in the larger perspective of all Islamic history – results from the ideological rivalry between the Umayyad and the Abbasid caliphate and so, in a broader sense, between the Islamic West and the Islamic East.

While some of Martinez-Gros' interpretations of narrative motifs are open to debate, this question of the ideological relationship between the East and the West of the Islamic world does indeed seem a crucial element of the Umayyad political imaginary. Thus, in the reasoning of Gabriel Martinez-Gros, the narrative sources are used primarily to explain how al-Andalus and its ruling dynasty were imagined and how its history was conceived in order to serve the purposes of the caliphal political agenda. Consequently, 'the Eastern' and 'the Western' are transposed to the purely symbolic sphere and do not necessarily refer to any social realities, which sets Martinez-Gros apart from Eduardo Manzano Moreno. The latter insists on clear distinction between the conquerors and the conquered, as well as between the patrons and clients in al-Andalus and argues that what we know as Umayyad historiography

results from these divisions, being essentially written by the clients. This is a perspective adopted to some extent by Nicola Clarke in her study of the narrative patterns in the histories of the conquest of al-Andalus – but Clarke places herself between the two previous strands of research, as she combines the analysis of the narrative patterns in historiography with the discussion of social realities that may have influenced it.

MALIKISM AND THE UMAYYAD CALIPHATE OF CORDOBA

The beginnings of the Maliki school of law (*madhhab*) in al-Andalus have been extensively discussed in modern scholarship at least since the seminal work of José Lopez Ortiz published in 1930.[26] The process of the transmission of Malik b. Anas' (d. 795) doctrine to al-Andalus and its early reception in the country is fairly well known or, rather, a certain history of this transmission is well attested in the available sources. According to the classical sources and most modern scholars, the school of law predominant in al-Andalus before the advent of Malikism (around the time of arrival of ʿAbd al-Rahman I to the country) was Awzaʿism. While we do not know the exact relationship between the two schools in al-Andalus in the eighth and ninth century, the image that we get from reading the available sources (mostly biographical dictionaries, the oldest of which, al-Khushani's *Akhbar al-fuqahaʾ wa-l-muhaddithin*,[27] dates from the second half of the tenth century) is one of a gradual abandonment of the Awzaʿi school and its replacement by Malikism.

Of course, many reservations can be formulated both with regard to the notion of the 'school of law' (*madhhab*) in the second half of the ninth century[28] and to the nature of our sources, which might present the early history of Malikism in accordance with the political or ideological bias of the period when they were written.[29] We can, however, safely establish the history of the transmission of Malik b. Anas' legal doctrine to al-Andalus (that is, the transmission of the traditions contained in his compilation, *al-Muwattaʾ*, as well as his legal opinions and clarifications [*raʾy*]). The first Andalusian scholar reported by the sources to have traveled to Medina during the reign of ʿAbd al-Rahman I and heard *hadith* from Malik himself (as well as from al-Awzaʿi) is al-Ghazi (or al-Ghaz) b. Qays (d. 814) whose visit to this city must have taken place in the period from 756 to 774.[30] Although the sources assert that al-Ghazi b. Qays heard *al-Muwattaʾ* from Malik b. Anas and transmitted it in al-Andalus,[31] the recension (*riwaya*) transmitted by him is lost, most probably because it was eventually replaced by that of Ziyad b. ʿAbd al-Rahman, known as Shabtun (d. 808 or 809).[32] We are told by the sources that he also heard *al-Muwattaʾ* directly from Malik b. Anas some years later than al-Ghazi (in 795, the year of Malik's death). Shabtun transmitted what could have been a recension different from the one known by al-Ghazi b. Qays, as historians Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr (d. 1071, quoted by Ibn Hayyan) and al-Maqqari (d. 1632) both insist on the fact that it was a 'complete' version.[33]

Alfonso Carmona thinks that this history implies deficiencies in al-Ghazi b. Qays' transmission, because it was eventually replaced by the Shabtun's *riwaya*. When we take into account that the corpus of traditions included in *al-Muwattaʾ* was expanded by Malik b. Anas through the years (it is likely that it was more extensive in the year of Malik's death than in the period when al-Ghazi b. Qays visited Medina) and that both Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr and al-Maqqari state that Shabtun was the first scholar

to introduce *al-Muwattaʾ* to al-Andalus, the assertion that al-Ghazi's recension was eventually disregarded and forgotten seems plausible.

Shabtun's student, Yahya b. Yahya al-Laythi (d. 849) is credited with the introduction of a third recension of *al-Muwattaʾ* to al-Andalus. Although he is generally considered to have been a direct disciple of Malik b. Anas,[34] Maribel Fierro convincingly proved that it is very unlikely that they had ever met.[35] Nevertheless, it was this third recension of *al-Muwattaʾ* to reach al-Andalus (subsequently corrected by Yahya's student, Muhammad b. Waddah [d. 900]) that eventually became prevalent in the country.

The number of direct Andalusian disciples of Malik is, nevertheless, a difficult question, as sources (especially later ones) tend to 'inflate' their number for various ideological reasons.[36]

Indeed, the variety of recensions circulating in al-Andalus led Norman Calder to suppose that *al-Muwattaʾ* is more of a collective work, begun by Malik b. Anas, but completed by later generations of jurists – 'a product of organic growth'.[37] However, Calder's hypothesis is now widely rejected.[38] It was refuted principally by Maribel Fierro who argued that there were proofs that *al-Muwattaʾ* circulated both in the Islamic East and West as a work attributed to Malik b. Anas and that every one of its recensions was transmitted as a corpus of *hadith* heard directly from him (this is true also for the version of Yahya b. Yahya, despite the fact that he probably never had the possibility of hearing it directly from Malik). Fierro also points out that since *al-Muwattaʾ* only reached the status of a 'canonical' compilation of *hadith* during the reign of ʿAbd al-Rahman III (912–61), it is improbable that it was indeed a result of a collective effort of Andalusian jurists from the ninth century, rather than a work of Malik b. Anas.[39] Hence, it seems clear that the reception of *al-Muwattaʾ* in al-Andalus took place relatively early – it is likely that the oldest Andalusian recensions originated while Malik was still alive. The Maliki tradition has to be considered as old and already well established in the country when the caliphate was proclaimed in Cordoba in 929.

However, the reception of the Maliki doctrine in al-Andalus does not involve only the introduction of *al-Muwattaʾ* to the country. An equally, if not even more important aspect of this process is the reception and development of the Maliki *raʾy* – that is, legal opinions and principles of interpretation. Several generations of jurists were instrumental in this process, and it is through the adaptation of *raʾy*, not Malik's compilation of *hadith* in itself, that Andalusian Malikism took its shape. A detailed description of this development has been adequately provided elsewhere, but the outline of events is as follows.

The jurists who introduce Maliki *raʾy* to al-Andalus are generally considered the second generation of Malikis in al-Andalus, the first one being the generation of al-Ghazi b. Qays and Shabtun. This second generation of Malikis flourished in mid-ninth century. The main characters were the aforementioned Yahya b. Yahya al-Laythi, ʿIsa b. Dinar (d. 828) as well as ʿAbd al-Malik b. Habib (d. 853).[40] This second generation transmitted the legal *dicta* of Malik b. Anas and, in some cases, other jurists.[41] Some of them (as, for example Ibn Habib, student of an Awzaʿite scholar Saʾsaʾ b. Sallam[42]) heard *hadith* and learned law with scholars of various schools. Thus, although it is in this period that the Maliki jurisprudence began to

gain importance in al-Andalus and perhaps gradually to prevail over the *madhhab* of al-Awzaʿi, the scholarly circles are far from constituting a monoculture, as many of its adherents had varied backgrounds, or combined different legal traditions in their activities. Some of the jurists from this generation abandoned Awzaʿism for Malikism and the general image of the relations between the two seems rather nuanced – already in an earlier generation Musʿab b. ʿImran, a *qadi* of Cordoba who died in the beginning of the reign of al-Hakam I (796–822), was supposed to have been a student of both Malik b. Anas and al-Awzaʿi, but adhered to neither of their respective doctrines in particular, sentencing according to his own opinion.[43] We can also probably conclude that this pluralism contributed to the early reception of Malikism in al-Andalus consisting not exclusively of *al-Muwattaʾ*, which must have been only one of the compilations of *hadith* in circulation. In the mid-ninth century it was as yet far from attaining any superior status. It is then in this period that the peculiar phenomenon of a prevalence of the *raʾy*, or opinions and interpretation, over the *hadith* reports themselves starts to originate.

The third generation of Andalusian Malikites was also instrumental in the development of the *madhhab* on the Iberian Peninsula. At least one of this generation of jurists put great emphasis on *al-Muwattaʾ* – Yahya b. Muzayn (d. 873) was a student of the last direct disciples of Malik b. Anas and wrote several works concerning Malik's compilation. He also encouraged his own disciples to study it.[44] But perhaps the most significant contribution of this generation of scholars to the development of the Andalusian Malikism is reflected by the fact that another famous compilation – Sahnun's *al-Mudawwana* – began to circulate in al-Andalus in this period,[45] having been transmitted from North Africa. Eventually, *al-Mudawwana* would achieve the status of the most important compilation of *hadith* in the Andalusian Maliki jurisprudence. Another important text is the famous *al-Mustakhraja min al-asmaʾ mimma laysa fi l-Mudawwana* ('A compendium of [teachings] heard [from Malik] which are not in the *Mudawwana*'), commonly known as *al-ʿUtbiyya*, after its compiler, Muhammad b. Ahmad al-ʿUtbi (d. 869).[46] These two compilations were widely used by the Andalusian Maliki jurists and shaped the legal doctrine particular to al-Andalus even in comparison with Malikism in other lands. Alfonso Carmona stresses that the Andalusian Maliki doctrine itself was far from being monolithic – there were jurists whose thought was rather unorthodox in comparison with mainline Malikism, the most famous examples being Baqi b. Makhlad (d. 889) and Qasim b. Muhammad b. Sayyar (d. 891).[47] Andalusian Malikism was a conglomerate of various (and often contradictory) traditions; many of these discrepancies were eliminated to some extent in the latter half of the ninth century.[48]

Although many details are known concerning the early history of Malikism in al-Andalus, we are rather ill-informed as to many important aspects of this process, including why this *madhhab* achieved at the expense of other legal schools and whether the Umayyads were involved and if so, how. These problems have caught the attention of scholars of al-Andalus since Reinhart Dozy, who thought that Malik b. Anas felt 'mortal hatred' towards the Abbasids, at the same time holding Hisham I (d. 796) the Umayyad *amir* of al-Andalus, in very high esteem.[49] For this scholar then, the factors facilitating the future dominance of Malikism in al-Andalus are the assumed enmity between the school's founder and the Abbasid rivals of the Umayyads, as well as the respect of Malik b. Anas for Hisham I resulting from the

exceptional personal qualities of the latter. José López Ortiz refutes this argument, stating that it is incoherent with the fact that Hisham's successor, al-Hakam I (d. 822), had a very strained relationship with the early Maliki jurists. The explanation for the great success of Malikism in al-Andalus offered by López Ortiz is instead taken from Ibn Khaldun, according to whom Andalusian scholars had better access to Maliki learning than other schools of thought because they could study at its source, in Medina, during the pilgrimages (Kufa and other eastern centres of learning being harder for them to access). Additionally, Egypt was also an important centre of Maliki learning and many Andalusians (like Ibn Habib) studied with the Egyptian masters, often also on the occasion of pilgrimages.[50] Roger Hady Idris, beside stressing Malik's disapproval of the Abbasids, argued that Malikism was adopted by the Muslim middle class, to whom religious studies yielded prestige in the eyes of the upper and lower class of the society.[51] Mahmud ʿAli Makki argued (in addition to many of the arguments summarised above) that Awzaʿism was a school preoccupied mainly with military law,[52] well adapted to the period directly after the conquest, but unsuitable for a more stable society of the Umayyad al-Andalus. Moreover, he pointed out that Hanafism was unlikely to take root in al-Andalus due to its links to the Abbasid caliphate.[53] These arguments were raised by many scholars and they shaped the general discussion about the reasons for the dominance of Malikism in al-Andalus.[54]

As it is evident from this brief survey, the Umayyad involvement in this phenomenon supposedly consisted either in the personal relationship of Hisham I with Malik b. Anas or in the alleged rejection of Hanafism as an Abbasid *madhhab*. Maribel Fierro attempts to address this problem by proposing a different periodisation of Andalusian Malikism.[55] Instead of dividing Maliki scholars simply into generations, she prefers to perceive distinct phases of development of this *madhhab* in al-Andalus. According to this chronology the Malikis from the first half of the ninth century, that is the first and the second generation from Carmona's chronology that I have used thus far, are 'proto-Malikis' and are essentially jurists who rely on sound legal opinion (*raʾy*), rather than on the *hadith* itself (hence the great role of *al-Mudawwana* and *al-ʿUtbiyya* in this period). Maribel Fierro argues that in this period the Andalusian Malikism was subject to many distinct influences and came under pressure from the *ahl al-hadith*. According to Fierro, it is only after this group overcame internal differences and successfully confronted this threat that we can talk of 'Malikis' in al-Andalus – the 'Malikis' in this strict sense of the term grant more importance to *al-Muwattaʾ* and the figure instrumental in this change is Muhammad b. Waddah (d. 900).[56] The real onset of Malikism (in the strict sense of the word) in al-Andalus takes place as late as in the tenth century.

Maribel Fierro also states that the Andalusian Malikism underwent a radical reform over the course of the second half of the tenth and the eleventh century, which is partially due to the polemics with Ibn Hazm (who left the Maliki *madhhab* for Zahirism) and the activity of reformist Maliki jurists such as Abu-l-Walid al-Baji (d. 1081) or Abu Bakr b. al-ʿArabi (d. 1148). Thus, the latter half of the eleventh and the twelfth centuries constitute the period of 'reformed Malikism'. For Fierro, Andalusian jurisprudence has always tended to be local – there has never been any real possibility of adopting Shafiʿism or Hanbalism at the expense of Malikism. The only viable alternatives to it were either Zahirism (due to the influence of Ibn Hazm)

or the Almohad doctrine – these 'local' inspirations of jurisprudence can be perceived as a peculiarity of Andalusian intellectual culture.[57] Fierro also explores the Umayyad involvement in the spread of Malikism in al-Andalus, stressing that in the tenth century the dynasty voiced support for Malikism during the struggle against internal revolts and threats to orthodoxy, as well as in their rivalry with the Fatimids.[58]

However, none of the studies referenced here deals extensively with the importance of Malikism to the Umayyad ideology of power, nor is Malikism discussed at length by scholars working in the field of the narrative sources mentioned in the first section of the present chapter. This is the case despite the fact that Malikism and law in general seem to be a very important aspect of the Umayyad ideology, as evidenced by both biographical dictionaries and chronicles. The following part of the chapter will focus on a brief discussion of the image of al-Hakam I in the *Ta'rikh iftitah al-Andalus* ('History of the Conquest of al-Andalus') of Ibn al-Qutiyya, as an example of the use of law in the construction of the Umayyad ideology of power.

LAW AND IDEOLOGY: HISHAM I, AL-HAKAM I AND THE JURISTS

Before I proceed to the image of al-Hakam I in Ibn al-Qutiyya's narrative, it is worth stressing that history of jurisprudence is an important theme in caliphal historiography. Particularly significant here is the figure of Muhammad b. Harith al-Khushani (d. 971), author of *Akhbar al-fuqaha' wa-l-muhaddithin* ('Traditions on jurists and experts of *hadith*'), one of the oldest preserved Andalusian biographical dictionaries,[59] and the *Kitab al-Qudat bi-Qurtuba* ('Book of judges of Cordoba').[60] Al-Khushani, born in Kairouan, migrated to al-Andalus as a young man in 924[61] and in subsequent years was closely related with the future caliph, al-Hakam II (r. 961–76). He belonged to the circle of authors supported by al-Hakam, which contributed to the creation of the Umayyad caliphal historiography. Al-Khushani was predominantly a historian of Maliki law and jurisprudence, classical sources also attribute to him some other, supposedly more general, biographical dictionaries.[62] His works were widely used as sources by important later authors like Ibn al-Faradi (who provides us with a biography of al-Khushani himself)[63] or Qadi 'Iyad.[64] The fact that an author like al-Khushani, mainly interested in the history and doctrine of the Maliki *madhhab*, belonged to an elite circle of intellectuals benefiting from the caliphal heir's patronage may in itself support the thesis that the history of law was a relatively important part of the 'official' Umayyad historiography and ideology.

The *Kitab al-Qudat bi-Qurtuba* is the work of al-Khushani that is perhaps the most significant for the study of these problems. The first notable thing in this regard is the subject matter of this source. The judges of Cordoba were the principal justice officers in al-Andalus, personally chosen and nominated by the *amir* or caliph and responsible directly before him. The range of competences of the judges of Cordoba tended to be rather vast, from sentencing or presiding over the court (especially in high-profile cases), through counseling the *amir*, up to supervising the work of judicial administration of lower ranks. On the whole, the judges of Cordoba were amongst the highest state officials, intimately linked to the monarchs themselves. To some extent, dispensing justice by the judges was regarded as exercising the prerogative of

the *amir* – hence, the judge's virtues and competence can be ascribed to the *amir* and his just reign, while the shortcomings of the judge are the liability of the ruler[65] and this relationship is well visible in the *Kitab al-Qudat bi-Qurtuba*. Thus, the chronologically arranged biographical dictionary of Cordoban judges is in reality a source close to being a history of the Umayyad justice and lawmaking.

Of particular interest here is the preface to the book, clearly stating the Umayyad ideological agenda:

> The *amir* (may God protect him!)[66] took the decision (may God aid him in its accomplishment!) to preserve knowledge and encourage studying of history, pondering of genealogy, preservation of the traces of the past, describing the virtues of the ancestors (without forgetting the merits of their successors) and remembrance of all human learning that was forgotten, both from what befell in the past and from what happened in recent times. … Learned men, incited by the *amir*, have then undertaken the task of collecting rare traditions and carefully registering precious knowledge that they have neglected hitherto. In this way they have gained the *amir*'s favour (may God protect him!). …
>
> Glory be to God who has caused the *amir* (may God grant him his aid!) to be the imam in what is good, a guide on a clearly traced path, a model of good conduct inspiring what is noble, a key to praiseworthy deeds and a gate to all virtue. May He bestow His grace upon him, prolongate his prosperity …[67] grant him His benevolence and make his fate full of happiness.[68]

Equally interesting in this context is the famous story of the judge of ʿAbd al-Rahman I (d. 788) and a famous early *muhaddith* from Syria, Muʿawiya b. Salih (d. second half of the eighth century).[69] ʿAbd al-Rahman sent Muʿawiya to Syria in order to bring the *amir*'s sister to al-Andalus. Before returning, Muʿawiya met some Umayyad clients in Syria who entrusted him with gifts for the *amir*. Among these gifts were Syrian pomegranates, which were subsequently given to the *amir* while he and his courtiers expressed nostalgia for Syria, and finally planted in al-Andalus by a man called Safar, giving abundant fruit.[70] This story is rich in symbolic meanings and coherent with other historiographical *topoi* used to convey the Umayyad ideology of power. Al-Andalus becomes here a 'new Syria' and a seat of the renewed caliphate. It is also important to note that the pomegranates, the attribute of the transfer of the caliphal authority from Syria to al-Andalus, are delivered to the *amir* by his judge. On the whole, it is fairly clear that the history of law and jurisprudence is an important facet of the Umayyad historiography – the history of Cordoban judges is a history of the Umayyad imamate and its justice. The legitimisation of Umayyad power is carried out largely by the authority of lawyers.

One can find similar logics in Ibn al-Qutiyya's *Taʾrikh iftitah al-Andalus*. Muhammad b. ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-Aziz, called Ibn al-Qutiyya, was a Cordoban scholar reputed by his contemporaries mainly as a grammarian and lexicographer of Arabic, not as a historian, despite the fact that the *Taʾrikh* is his now best-known work. Ibn al-Faradi, author of the biographical dictionary entitled *Taʾrikh ʿulamaʿ al-Andalus* ('History of Learned Men of al-Andalus') and a student of Ibn al-Qutiyya, includes a biography of his master in the dictionary, but nowhere does he state that Ibn al-Qutiyya was a historian or chronicler, nor does he quote the *Taʾrikh iftitah*

al-Andalus among his works.[71] This, as well as some textual problems, led to considerable debates as to the nature of this chronicle, its authorship, and the state of its preservation.[72] However, later classical historians (as, for example, Ibn Hayyan) use this chronicle, attributing it unanimously to Ibn al-Qutiyya and the majority of their quotations can be found in the version of the text known to us. It is likely, then, that its primary authorship can be attributed to Ibn al-Qutiyya, which does not exclude the possibility of later changes that influenced the text known today – it is even possible that the text only originated after the death of Ibn al-Qutiyya, who may have transmitted its contents only orally.[73] Regardless of these problems, the *Ta'rikh* constitutes one of the principal narrative sources from the Umayyad period, where an Umayyad ideology is very clearly visible.

Law and jurisprudence also seem to be an important aspect of this ideology in this chronicle, which covers the period from the Muslim conquest of al-Andalus in the eighth century through to the reign of ʿAbd al-Rahman III in the tenth. Ibn al-Qutiyya describes the aforementioned good mutual relationship between Hisham I and Malik b. Anas. We are told that an Andalusian jurist, Ziyad b. ʿAbd al-Rahman al-Lakhmi travelled to Medina, where Malik b. Anas wanted to know what Hisham was like. After Ziyad had praised him, Malik exclaimed: 'May God adorn our Heavenly Paradise with such a one as this!'[74] Later on, we read that Hisham I was passing by Ibn Abi Hind, a jurist who was credited with being Malik's disciple, and greeted him: 'Malik has clothed you in a magnificent robe'.[75] One can wonder to what extent these accounts are legendary. Even if we accept that there is some degree of veracity in these accounts, it is highly doubtful, in the light of research on the origins of Malikism in al-Andalus discussed above, that the mutual good opinion of each other held by Hisham I and Malik, contributed to the spread of Malikism in al-Andalus in this period. This is especially true given that the actual number of Andalusian direct disciples of Malik b. Anas was probably lower than some classical sources would lead us to believe.

Nevertheless, even if we disregard any possibility that Malik could have heard praises of Hisham from an Andalusian jurist and held the Umayyad *amir* in high esteem afterwards, the association of Hisham I with Malikism seems to play an important role in shaping the image of the Umayyad dynasty in Ibn al-Qutiyya's chronicle. The *Ta'rikh* was written (or compiled) in the age when the Maliki school was already dominant in al-Andalus. The association of Hisham I with Malik b. Anas strengthens the portrayal of the Umayyads as just rulers whose bonds to Malikism (deemed the superior *madhhab*) are old, dating to the days of the eponymous founder of the school. It also conveys the view that the Maliki tradition in al-Andalus is both old and prestigious, stemming directly from its source. As we have seen, this was one of the preoccupations of the classical historians of Andalusian Malikism who sometimes 'inflated' the number of the Andalusian disciples of Malik in order to render this branch of the *madhhab* more prestigious.[76]

This link between Hisham I and Malik b. Anas seems important also because it serves as an introduction to the turbulent reign of Hisham's successor, al-Hakam I. José López Ortiz points out that it was highly improbable that Malikism had already become dominant in al-Andalus during Hisham's reign (as is asserted by Dozy), because of the very complicated relationship of al-Hakam I with the early Andalusian Malikis.[77] The conflict between the ruler and the jurists (which may have

existed earlier) was aggravated by the so-called 'revolt of the suburbs' in 818, which was largely led by the Maliki jurists on the account of the *amir*'s impiety and excessive taxation. Al-Hakam I eventually prevailed in what seems a rebellion that could have potentially dethroned him.[78] This resulted in mass persecutions and executions, including the persecution of jurists. (Even the most prominent ones, like ʿIsa b. Dinar or Yahya b. Yahya, were put to flight.) This episode was the second uprising to be crushed ruthlessly by al-Hakam I. Some years earlier, in 796–7 or, more probably, 807–8, he had orchestrated the massacre of the elites of the rebellious city of Toledo, known as 'the Massacre of the Fosse' (*waqʿat al-hufra*). Indeed, revolt is the main motif of Ibn al-Qutiyya's account of the reign of al-Hakam's reign in the *Taʾrīkh*. After relating some anecdotes on the *amir*'s general character and on some of his officers, Ibn al-Qutiyya states that 'al-Hakam was involved in three great conflicts'.[79] These are: the rebellion of Toledo, the 'revolt of the suburbs', and a revolt of an otherwise unknown Khariji group in Algeciras.[80] The accounts of the former two are considerably more extensive than is the case with the latter.

After describing these conflicts Ibn al-Qutiyya proceeds to relate some of al-Hakam's glorious acts and many are related to law or jurists. The most famous (and often also related by later authors) is probably the story of Talut b. ʿAbd al-Jabbar, a jurist who was hiding from al-Hakam's persecution in the household of his Jewish neighbour. Eventually, he asked his friend, and vizier to al-Hakam, Abu Bassam, for protection before the *amir*, but Abu Bassam instead denounced him and brought him to the court. Yet, al-Hakam pardoned Talut and, learning of Abu Bassam's betrayal, exiled him from his palace.[81] Although recent studies have shown that the whole episode is most probably entirely legendary,[82] it is nonetheless significant. There may be a reason for a peculiar construction of the chapters discussing the reign of al-Hakam in Ibn al-Qutiyya's chronicle. The praiseworthy deeds (*mafakhir*) of al-Hakam may be related in order to inscribe his reign into the general vision of the Umayyad dynasty mentioned above. With al-Hakam it was a particularly difficult task, as it is hard to portray a ruler who endured a major clash with the jurists and subsequently persecuted them as an adamant defender of the Maliki doctrine, as was customary in the Umayyad historiography. Hence, al-Hakam is presented as a ruler not yielding before anything in order to preserve the state and dynastic power. In the *Taʾrikh* we read two verses, supposedly composed by the *amir* himself:

> Take my weapon, for I have given it to peaceful rest:
> But never to an opponent!

The story of Talut b. ʿAbd al-Jabbar seems to serve a dual purpose – the first one is to present a ruler as a merciful and just one (al-Hakam forgives Talut – presented as a prominent Maliki jurist who only opposed the *amir* due to his sense of what is just – and chases away the treacherous Abu Bassam), but also as a monarch who supports the rule of law even in the difficult circumstances of his turbulent reign – we are told that he eventually repented his persecution of the suburb rebels (that is jurists) and became very pious.[83] We are also told of al-Hakam's successful campaigns in Galicia.[84] The section on the glorious deeds of al-Hakam concludes with two anecdotes further reinforcing the notions of tirelessly defending the state and the rule of law. Both are transmitted by a no less a person than Muhammad b. Waddah, a prominent Maliki

from the second half of the ninth century (belonging to the generation that followed the one involved in the 'revolt of the suburbs'):

> A certain person of distinction related that a favourite concubine of al-Hakam said that one night he left her bed, and she thought the worst, as women do, when they are overcome with jealousy. 'I followed him,' she said, 'but found him prostrating himself and praying.' When he came back to me, I told him what I had been thinking, what I did, and that I found him praying. He said to me, 'I entrusted Muhammad b. Bashir with the post of chief judge. I was happy with that and I trusted him. I was confident that he would deal justly with people's cases and misdeeds. I was happy – until this evening, when I learnt that he is seriously ill and will die. I was worried and upset, so I got up [tonight] and asked God to send me someone else to replace him, in whom I can trust and appoint as judge after him.

The second anecdote is this:

> One day al-Hakam – may God have mercy on him – rode out for pleasure. He dismounted wanting to rest, and he sat down, then lay back and sighed. He looked towards a valley and said, 'On the Day of Judgement the Dissenters will come – I can almost see them now pouring out of this valley, killing people and enslaving children. I hope there will be an 'al-Hakam' alive to be victorious and defend Islam.[85]

It is clear that Ibn al-Qutiyya (or the later compiler) attempts to fit the troubles of the reign of al-Hakam I into the model already set with the reigns of ʿAbd al-Rahman I and, more importantly, Hisham I. Even if he did relentlessly persecute the prominent Andalusian Malikis, there is no doubt left that he was above all a staunch defender of the state and law, who came to repent his anger at the end of his life and whose main preoccupations were having a just judge and the ultimate fate of al-Andalus confronted with eschatological enemy.

CONCLUSION

In this example we can see the main difficulty in the studying of the beginnings of Malikism in al-Andalus and the links of this *madhhab* with the Umayyad dynasty. While the biographical dictionaries and other sources provide us with an abundance of details concerning the early history of Malikism in al-Andalus, we are still at a loss when it comes to determining its many crucial aspects. It is very difficult to name the exact period when this school first becomes dominant in al-Andalus (as we have seen, the main theories in scholarship differ in this regard) or why it achieved this peculiar of dominance. It can be said that the aforementioned 'revolt of the suburbs' represents a major turning point (we are ill-informed as to why the revolt broke out or what in particular caused the Maliki jurists to act as its leaders) – the policy of al-Hakam's son and successor, ʿAbd al-Rahman II (d. 852), will be very different. During his reign Maliki scholars (perhaps most importantly, ʿAbd al-Malik b. Habib) made their way to the highest offices and their influence seemingly rose in comparison

to the reigns of ʿAbd al-Rahman's predecessors.[86] At the same time, the example of Ibn al-Qutiyya shows the extent to which the accounts of jurists and jurisprudence can be ideologically biased, which further complicates our task of 'reconstructing' the relationship between the Umayyads and the Malikis. The early history of Maliki law does not appear, so far, to be a major theme in the research on the Umayyad ideology of power. It is hoped that the present chapter may contribute to broadening our knowledge of these questions and showing, if only partially, the importance of jurisprudence in the historiographical image of the Cordoban Umayyads.

NOTES

1 The two first modern syntheses of history of al-Andalus treat this period extensively, entire volumes being dedicated to it. Dozy 1861: III and Lévi-Provençal 1956: II and III (the second volume deals with political history of the caliphate, while the third contains a survey of the Andalusian culture in this period).
2 Martinez-Gros 1992.
3 Martinez-Gros 1997.
4 Cf. the subtitle of this book: *La construction de légitimité du Califat de Cordoue (Xe–XIe siècles)*.
5 Al-Khushani 1914. While this is technically not a narrative source in a sense of a chronicle, but a biographical dictionary, it is nonetheless arranged chronologically (not alphabetically, like most works in this genre), which gives a clear sense of a narrative and allows to treat it as a chronicle of Cordoban judges.
6 Ibn al-Qutiyya 1989 (English translation in James 2009).
7 This work has not survived in its entirety. It is a continuation of his father's, Ahmad b. Muhammad al-Razi's (d. 955), chronicle, entitled *Akhbar muluk al-Andalus* ('Traditions on the kings of al-Andalus'). This work has not survived in its original form, either. Only extensive fragments of both are preserved in the works of later historians, predominantly Ibn Hayyan (d. 1075). Additionally, a fifteenth-century Castilian translation of *Akhbar muluk al-andalus* exists and is known as the *Crónica del moro Rasis* (*Crónica del moro Rasis* 1975).
8 *Akhbar majmuʿa* 1867, English translation in James 2012.
9 *Una Crónica anónima de Abd al-Rahman III* 1950.
10 Al-Ahwani 1965.
11 ʿAbd Allah b. Bulughghin al-Ziri 1955; English translation in Tibi 1986.
12 Martinez-Gros 1992: 27–50.
13 Martinez-Gros 1992: 50–79.
14 Martinez-Gros 1992: 80–128.
15 Martinez-Gros 1992: 163–319 (that is, the second part of the book).
16 Martinez-Gros 1997.
17 Martinez-Gros 1997: 18–85.
18 Martinez-Gros 1997: 87–114.
19 See Martinez-Gros 1997: 115–66 (the third part of this book can be perceived as an extensive debate with Guichard's view of the social history and identity of al-Andalus); Guichard 1999 and, finally, Martinez-Gros 2000.
20 See Guichard 1977.
21 Martinez-Gros 1997: 115–20.
22 Borrut 2011, a work on Syria, can be quoted as an example. See also Borrut and Cobb 2010. Safran 2000 presents at times a similar approach, although this work contains only one cursory mention (at pages 6–7) of Martinez-Gros 1992.

23 Guichard 1977.
24 Manzano Moreno 1997, 1999 and 2004. For this author's overview of the role of the conquerors in the early period of the social history of al-Andalus see the first part of his *Conquistadores, emires y califas* (Manzano Moreno 2007: 29–186).
25 Clarke 2012.
26 López Ortiz 1930 (for an overview of earlier literature see 1–16). For a more recent and up-to-date treatment of the subject see Carmona 2006 and Fierro 2006.
27 al-Khushani 1992.
28 Maribel Fierro formulates a theory, according to which it is only in the tenth century that the Maliki legal school fully developed in al-Andalus (Fierro 2006). If we accept that point of view, it is difficult to discuss full-fledged schools of law about one hundred years earlier.
29 I try to discuss the ideological nature of some of the sources in Wilk 2011. While my views on the matter have somewhat evolved since the publication of this article, I still think that it is an interesting path to explore.
30 See primarily al-Khushani 1992: 292; Ibn al-Faradi 1891: I, 281–2 (no. 1013). See also Carmona 2006: 43–4 and the references provided in note 25. The year 756 is the beginning of the reign of ʿAbd al-Rahman I and 774 is the year when al-Awzaʾi died.
31 For example, in al-Khushani 1992: 292 we learn from Asbagh b. Khalil that he used to listen to al-Ghazi transmit *al-Muwattaʾ* (*Kunna ʿinda-hu yawman nasmaʾu min-hu al-Muwattaʾ*).
32 See primarily al-Khushani 1992: 95–8, Ibn al-Qutiyya 1989: 62 (English translation in James 2009: 83), Ibn al-Faradi 1891: I, 131–3 (no. 456). See also Carmona 2006: 44 and the references provided in the notes.
33 Ibn Hayyan 1999: 64 (fol. 119v) (Spanish translation in Ibn Hayyan 2001: 104–5), al-Maqqari 1968: II, 46.
34 Carmona 2006: 44 and the references quoted therein.
35 Fierro 1997: 285–8.
36 See López Ortiz 1930: 56–7; Makki 1968: 96–7; Fierro 1997: 286.
37 Calder 1993: 20–39, especially 35–6.
38 For a summary of the debate see Wymann-Landgraf 2013: 54–7.
39 See Fierro 1997: 309–10. See also Motzki 1998, especially 29 and Fernández Felix 2003: 320–5.
40 Author of many preserved compilations of hadith and legal texts, as well as of the oldest known chronicle of al-Andalus, the *Kitab al-Taʾrikh* (Ibn Habib 1991).
41 For example the extant fragments of Ibn Habib's *Kitab al-Wadiha* do not exclusively contain material related directly with Malik – in fact, the majority of *hadith* contained therein was not transmitted by him. ʿIsa b. Dinar learned the Maliki doctrine not from Malik himself or even Medina, but predominantly from Egyptian Malikis (see Carmona 2006: 47).
42 On Saʾsaʾ b. Sallam see Ibn al-Faradi 1891: I, 169–70 (no. 608).
43 On Musʾab b. ʿImran see al-Khushani 1914: 45–51; Ibn al-Faradi 1891: II, 10 (no. 1431).
44 Al-Khushani 1992: 371; Carmona 2006: 49.
45 On *al-Mudawwana* see principally Calder 1993: 1–19; Wymann-Landgraf 2013: 63–81. (The latter author does not attribute *al-Mudawwana* strongly to Sahnun (d. 854–5), as it is customary, but rather considers it a work of Malik himself.)
46 On al-ʿUtbi and his compilation see the extensive work of Ana Fernández Felix (Fernández Felix 2003).
47 See Carmona 2006: 51–3.
48 See Carmona 2006: 53–6.
49 Dozy 1861: II, 56. Dozy's second assertion is based on a fragment of the chronicle of Ibn al-Qutiyya, to which I will have an occasion to return. The argument of Malik's hostility towards the Abbasids is also advanced by Hady Roger Idris (Idris 1967: 401).

50 See López Ortiz 1930: 24–6.
51 See Idris 1967: 397–406. This argument, as it was justly observed by Jorge Aguadé (Aguadé 1986: 61), fails to account for the fact that this was the case with all legal schools in the classical Islamic world, not only with Malikism.
52 This view has been disproven since, mainly by Judd 2006 and 2013: 71–9. See also Judd in this volume.
53 Makki 1968: 90–4. The argument on Hanafism is also advanced by Maribel Fierro (Fierro 1997: 336, see also Fierro 2006: 67).
54 For summaries of earlier discussions see Aguadé 1986: 54–62 (this author opts for the 'geographical' explanation provided by Ibn Khaldun); Fierro 1987: 32–7 (with an interesting suggestion of the presence of Hanafi jurisprudence in *al-Mudawwana*).
55 Fierro 2006.
56 Fierro 2006: 70.
57 Fierro 2006: 76.
58 Fierro 2006: 58–60. (The revolt in question is the one of the son of ʿAbd al-Rahman III, ʿAbd Allah al-Zahid, executed in 950. He supposedly supported Shafiʿism and the *ahl al-hadith*. The condemnation of Ibn Masarra's movement is also mentioned by Fierro.)
59 Al-Khushani 1992.
60 Al-Khushani 1914.
61 Ibn al-Faradi 1891: I, 404 (no. 1398).
62 For a full list of al-Khushani's works, apart from the two quoted above see: al-Khushani 1992: xxxviii–xxxix (the majority is lost, two other works are edited and published).
63 See above, n. 60.
64 On the general reception of al-Khushani's works by later authors see al-Khushani 1992: xvii–xxxv.
65 This is the case not only in al-Andalus, but also in other regions of the classical Islamic world. See for example a general survey in Masud, Peters and Powers 2005; on the Abbasid state Tillier 2009 (on delegation of emiral prerogatives especially 96–135).
66 As stated above, the emir in question is al-Hakam II.
67 A lacuna in the preserved text.
68 Al-Khushani 1914: 6–7 (Arabic text), 4–5 (Spanish translation). The translation above is my own.
69 On Muʾawiya b. Salih see Fierro 1988 (on discrepant traditions concerning the date of his death see 355–9).
70 Al-Khushani 1914: 32–3 (Arabic text), 41 (Spanish translation).
71 Ibn al-Faradi 1891: I, 370–2 (no. 1316).
72 For a useful and recent summary see James 2009: 1–46 and the literature quoted therein.
73 James 2009: 29–31.
74 Ibn al-Qutiyya 1989: 62. English translation quoted here, from James 2009: 83.
75 Ibn al-Qutiyya 1989: 63 (English translation: James 2009: 84).
76 See above, n. 38. On the veneration for Malik in al-Andalus see Turki 1971.
77 See López Ortiz 1930: 24–6.
78 Our main source for this rebellion is Ibn Hayyan, who describes it in rather dramatic terms. One of his sources is Ibn al-Qutiyya. Ibn Hayyan 1999: 31–50 (fols 103r–112v) (Spanish translation in Ibn Hayyan 2001: 55–81). For a general account of the rebellion see Lévi-Provençal 1956: I, 160–73.
79 *Wa-kanat lil-Hakam bi-l-Andalus thalath waqaʾiʿu al-ʿazima* (Ibn al-Qutiyya 1989: 64; translation in James 2009: 86).
80 Ibn al-Qutiyya is the only source to mention such episode. Ibn al-Qutiyya 1989: 67; translation in James 2009: 88.
81 Ibn al-Qutiyya 1989: 70–2; James 2009: 89–91.

82 See Molina 2011 (who argues that the Jewish neighbour is an invention) and Wasserstein 2015 (according to this study Talut himself never existed).
83 Ibn al-Qutiyya 1989: 72; James 2009: 89.
84 Ibn al-Qutiyya 1989: 70; James 2009: 89.
85 Ibn al-Qutiyya 1989: 73–4; James 2009: 91–2.
86 A striking example is the famous case of the nephew of ʿAjab, the favourite concubine of al-Hakam I, who was accused of blasphemy (*zandaqa*) and sentenced to death for a seemingly minor offence. All the jurists involved in the case taking place in 851 are Maliki – the emir clearly decides to follow the counsel of a minority among them, despite the fact that other opinions recommended absolving the defendant (see Fierro 1987: 57–63).

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